

## **Memo on the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund**

**Name:** Andrea Zopp, President & CEO, World Business Chicago

**Transition Committee:** Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development

**RE:** Initiative for the Objective “Ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth”

### **Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF)**

The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) is an invaluable economic development initiative, deploying revenue generated from downtown developments to commercial and cultural projects in neighborhoods on the South, Southwest, and West Sides of Chicago, thus directly tying growth in the Central Business District and Near West and North Sides to increase economic opportunity in underinvested neighborhoods.

### **Value Alignment**

At its core, NOF embodies the Lightfoot administration’s values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation. 75% of the awardees are from African American or Latino backgrounds, and all awarded projects support development in underserved neighborhoods, revitalizing corridors, and providing employment opportunities for local residents. However, the program falls short in the areas of transparency and accountability. Addressing the following challenges will strengthen and support all of the aforementioned values and help to improve programmatic outcomes.

### **Challenges**

- Lack of basic vetting prior to grant award
- Lack of funding support for community based organizations (CBOs) to provide intense consulting services to applicants
- Lack of clarity on the scope and depth of the entire process
- Lack of lenders who offer products for “blemished” borrowers
- Lack of transparency regarding the deployment of funds and project status

### **Solutions for Long-term Success**

- Establish baseline qualification criteria before awarding the grant
- Provide funding to CBOs to properly vet applicants and guide awardees through the process; include CBOs in the selection process
- Establish clear explanation of scope and depth of the entire process from application and award to finance and construction
- Identify lenders who will tailor products to meet the needs of the borrowers, consider upfront cash deployment, or establishment of loss reserve
- Establish formalized reporting on fund deployment and project status, perhaps quarterly (SomerCor)

**First 100 Days**

- Conduct a full review of NOF to include current pool of awardees, status of projects and explanation/solution for stalled projects
- Convene CBOs (and SomerCor) to hear directly from them what they have experienced over the last two years
- Convene lenders and challenge them to present products and workshops that align with the needs of a typical awardee
- Convene foundations and challenge them to think creatively about how they can participate and leverage NOF funding
- Establish a process to support current awardees and move their projects forward AND identify technical assistance and support for those awardees/projects falling short
- Designate a sub-committee charged with program re-design, including implementation strategy and accountability rubric

Mayor-Elect Transition Team Memorandum

Dr. Byron T. Brazier

Apostolic Church of God

The Network of Woodlawn

Arthur M. Brazier Foundation

The Purpose of this memo is to respond to the Mayor-elect's request.

As we continue to review specific recommendations during the transition team meeting, two factors must exist: 1) defined initiatives for ensuring that all neighborhoods participate in regional groups and 2) all individuals receive real opportunity and participate in the region's economic vitality.

In reviewing the values of the Lightfoot Administration, the question this memorandum looks to clarify is how do we address the systemic issues of culture and bias through progressive development of an institutional support system? We recognize that such communities are a totality of human relationships, distinguished by mutual interest, shared institutions, and culture, that are engaged in a common activity of living. At the same time, we recognize the causes for the dysfunction within under-served communities. In order to effectuate real change, there must be transformation of both systemic thought and the capacities that sustain community dysfunction. Over the years, our society has been inundated with excellent research. We are also inundated with the implementation of program-after-program and at the end of the programs, communities remain the same. In Woodlawn, the University of Chicago touts its community awareness and programs, but Woodlawn and Washington Park are still the same, primarily because their programming only impacts a few individuals and not the community at-large. University of Chicago's programming is more like trickle-down economics: it sounds good but no real impact.

The question becomes: How does the City of Chicago best support under-served communities to become self-determined and self-sustaining and less dependent on unsustainable programmatic initiatives? For this to be achieved, communities must organize as a collective body to receive the support offered by the City of Chicago or other philanthropic organizations. This type of necessary organizational capacity is described in the "The Promise of Comprehensive Community Development Report," authored by David Greenberg and Sonya Williams of MDRC. In summary, they explained, "that comprehensive community development may best be achieved not by a single organization but by the mobilization and coordination of many neighborhood actors. Program designers made a choice to rely on a single lead agency that is charged with facilitating collective work and is responsible for catalyzing action that is not fully in its control — a challenging task under the best of conditions. It is additionally challenging for organizations to become effective neighborhood-wide conveners or "intermediaries" when they do not already have these skills or where the local environment does not provide incentives to collaborate".

Concerning land development, we recognize that the current system of private development for land acquisition and development is a multi-layered, profit oriented system that is known to

enhance gentrification and regards involuntary displacement as a market consequence. Additionally, there is minimal monitoring of the developer's project delivery, project quality, and community benefit. Unfortunately, the developer-led process provides limited advantages when we consider the consequences of displacement.

If we were to effectively address community development, I would recommend creating a community-led development approach that acts in concert with private development. This approach is in formulation between the City of Chicago, Cook County Land Bank, three banks, LISC and the Public Building Commission.

The benefits of this process will include:

- Communities have the opportunity to participate in the capitalistic development process and become more self-determined and self-sufficient.
- It will support the inclusion of indigenous contractors and developers through the underwriting process.
- This process will intentionally address and minimize involuntary displacement through accelerated redevelopment and aggregation of institutional resources.
- It will balanced redevelopment across luxury, market rate, and workforce housing.
- Increased and sustained employment through accelerated and balanced development.

The final recommendations are being finalized and available in May 2019.





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**To:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**From:** Bill Fienup – mHUB cofounder and director of innovation services

**Committee:** Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development

I propose we strengthen regional economic growth by supporting and growing existing Chicago incubators and tech communities, and creating better connections to these centers throughout the city.

### **What's happening today that we need to keep**

There are several co-working spaces and incubators in the city of Chicago that promote regional economic growth through service and product innovation and the creation of new business. Examples include 1871, Blue1647, Bunker Labs, The Hatchery, MATTER, mHUB, MxD, Polsky Center, and TechNexus. Many of these facilities focus on specific technologies or industry sectors, but all of them create concentrations of expertise and talent. In addition to the powerful communities these incubators convene, they also provide access to education, mentorship, industry specific tools and network connections. The impact and economic multipliers of Chicago's innovation centers are impressive. mHUB alone has grown in the past two years to serve 1,200 individuals and 260 companies which have raised more than \$100M in capital and generated \$45.5M in revenue.

We need to continue to support these incubators because they reduce barriers to entry, help retain the graduates of local universities that commercialize university research, help transform ideas and technologies into revenue and employment-generating businesses, and continue support local established business by providing access to talent and ideas. Evidence suggest that these supportive communities increase the success rate of small businesses and entrepreneurs. According to the [National Business Incubation Association](#): after five years, businesses that were nurtured in a business incubator have a survival rate of 87 percent. By comparison, the survival rate for companies that go it alone without the benefits of incubator support is 44 percent.

### **What we need to implement in the next 100 days**

It requires several million dollars and an enormous amount of effort to standup and sustain each incubator in Chicago. These innovation centers also need to have a critical mass with a substantial amount of resources to create value for their members. Innovation is a collective process; it takes diversity of thought, expertise and resources. Building more incubators in every neighborhood would dilute the value and diversity and exacerbate social economic disparity. However, there is an opportunity to develop stronger connections to these innovation centers throughout the city through a variety of ways:

#### *Awareness*

We need to drive awareness and promote Chicago's current set of incubators and resources to a broader range of Chicagoans. Marketing efforts would be targeted to specific neighborhoods and communities to further attract diversity and create a culture of inclusion. Many individuals aren't aware of the city's existing resources or understand the value that they provide. Continued support and publicity from the Mayor's office are essential to the success of the Chicago Tech community.

### *Transportation infrastructure*

We leverage Chicago leading transportation infrastructure to connect these innovation centers to the distant neighborhoods. Divvy stations can be deployed at each incubator for sustainable accessibility and additional bus routes can be created to connect these incubators to different regions of the city.

### *Cost*

The membership dues at these innovation centers are still a barrier for some individuals, as well as the financial stability needed to become a full-time entrepreneur. To create a truly diverse and inclusive environment, there needs to be public support for grant programs and scholarships to target underrepresented individuals – not only to support membership pricing, but to provide the safety net needed to enable individuals to take a risk and build a business.

### *Education*

Many entrepreneurs don't realize what knowledge they lack to launch a successful business. The education curriculum is a critical piece to the success of a startup and is a large portion of the value creation of these incubators. It's especially important for individuals that are first-time entrepreneurs or are undergoing a career transition. Incubators need additional public support to build and sustain these education, mentorship and programming efforts.

## **What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

### *Strengthen ties*

For a long-term strategy, it would be wise to develop an organizational or physical tie between incubators/innovation centers. This can be done by co-locating Chicago's tech resources or creating an organizing body between existing centers. Pooling resources together, reducing duplicative initiatives, and consolidating educational programming would create economic efficiencies. This transformational tech/innovation ecosystem, or physical location, would attract entrepreneurs from around the world to build new businesses in Chicago.

### *Develop programs to connect entrepreneurs to capital*

Capitalizing on the era of the gig economy, there is great opportunity to connect entrepreneurs as R&D teams for businesses to both infuse innovation into the region's corporations and increase runways for the city's startups through additional revenue opportunities. An example of this can be seen through mHUB's contracting program, which curates talent from mHUB membership to create product innovation teams for small and medium sized manufacturers in the region. This should be expanded to include the entrepreneurs of other incubators and innovation centers.

## **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**

Getting the required support to create a governing organization, or a finding a suitable physical location for a mega incubator, would be challenging and ambitious. It would require significant funding and backing from both the private and public sectors. Many tech leaders would need to be aligned together in the mission and see the value of raising all tides for Chicago. It would require a team of dedicated individuals that are willing to not duplicate, but leverage and combine Chicago's existing resources under one organization or into one location. This vision is in line with some of the current P33 thinking and could be a goal for the Chicago Tech community in 2033.



**04.10.19**

**To: Mayor-elect Lightfoot's Transition Team**  
**From: Brad McConnell, CEO, Accion Chicago**  
**Re: Create community plans, bring deal talent to complex local projects, and invest in neighborhood entrepreneurs**

Thank you for the opportunity to help prepare the Mayor-elect for her first 100 days in office. This memo will suggest how the Mayor can **ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth**. I suggest the Mayor act in three ways to further this objective, none of which require City outlays before the 2020 budget is enacted:

- Partner with community leaders to create investment plans for every area of the city
- Attract deal-making talent to structure complex developments that the communities require
- Invest in small businesses by smartly leveraging the City's budget.

I will structure these ideas based on what is happening today upon which we can build, what we should implement immediately or within the first year, and what we can plan for longer-term implementation. I will conclude with observations on how these ideas promote equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation.

### **What is happening today upon which we can build**

Chicago is currently benefitting from one of the strongest development cycles in our history. Simultaneously, over the last several years many areas of the city have created development plans through [LISC's New Communities Program](#), the City's [Chicago Neighborhoods Now](#) effort and [land use plans](#), [CMAP planning](#), and many other initiatives. Yet significant developments often do not align with community plans, and have instead been driven by private developer demands, aldermanic or Mayoral priorities, existing land use entitlements, or other factors. This fissure has led to dynamic growth in some parts of the City and the generation of significant private profits, alongside increasing frustration from community residents that their neighborhoods have been poorly served by development or are missing out on needed development altogether.

### **What we should implement immediately or within the first year**

To increase equitable development in all of our neighborhoods, I recommend the Mayor-elect pursue three actions in the first 100 days:

*Partner with community leaders to create investment plans for every area of the city*

While some areas of the city have well-produced plans, the city as a whole has not created a Plan for Chicago for over fifty years. The Mayor-elect should instruct the Department of Planning and Development to organize and participate in community-driven discussions through which community leaders work together to create 16 investment plans that cover the entire city. DPD could start with the work begun under the Chicago Neighborhoods Now initiative from 2016 through which the City documented the current assets in our communities using similar geographies to those used in 1966, ignoring gerrymandered ward boundaries in favor of the city's physical infrastructure. Community leaders could use that asset layer as the basis for articulating what public and private investments would create the most value for their communities, answering what/where/why for each element of their plan. A multi-meeting but efficient process would require communities to focus on what they are for rather than what they oppose, and would create space for developers, financiers, landowners, residents, and advocates to build relationships and ideas together.

To create urgency for these discussions, the Mayor-elect should impose a deadline of Labor Day for the initial submissions of the 16 plans, so that the Mayor can then include a number of these ideas in her

first budget request that is traditionally submitted in late September. Setting expectations properly would be crucial: the Mayor should not commit to including all of these ideas in her first budget (or ever). Instead, she should encourage these community-led neighborhood councils to continue to meet each quarter after the initial plans are submitted to review progress against the objectives they've articulated and add new ideas, so that the plans improve as successes accumulate and needs evolve over time. The City would serve as a participant along the way to help find the private and public resources required to implement the community ideas, but City Hall should not serve as the dictator of the process nor as the apologist for any of the competing interests. The City's process costs would be nominal, consisting mostly of staff time.

### *Attract deal-making talent to structure complex developments that the communities require*

Once communities have highlighted the investments they believe will be most impactful, the most complex of those investment deals will require significant expertise. The Mayor-elect should call on the real estate and financial talent of the city to contribute to deal structuring in communities that lack that expertise. Using the Civic Consulting Alliance as a potential template and building upon JPMorgan Chase Foundation's recent work in this area, experienced pro bono deal teams could be assigned to projects that need expertise to attract the necessary financing, structure the deals, and close. Those teams could also partner with local community leaders, developers, and investors to build local capacity for future deals. The Mayor-elect could announce this offering as soon as the first five firms have committed to contribute and after she has established the number of deals that could be supported in the first year.

### *Invest in small businesses by smartly leveraging the City's budget.*

At the same time that larger investments are being planned and implemented, the Mayor-elect should also support the small businesses that create jobs and wealth in our communities. Through either the Treasurer's office or the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, the City should create a 0% interest loan pool through which nonprofit partners could provide low-interest loans to neighborhood entrepreneurs. Accion and our peers would repay the City over three years so that the taxpayers are whole by the end of the first term, and then use those funds to prudently invest in job creators throughout the city. At no cost, taxpayer dollars would generate wealth and jobs far in excess of what any other City investment could create. While I recommend \$1M for the pool, the size of the program could be larger or smaller and the wealth it creates will grow or shrink accordingly. The lenders should partner with the large number of organizations throughout the city who support small business to pair that capital with the coaching that neighborhood entrepreneurs need, building upon [ecosystem work](#) that is already underway and led by Accion. The Mayor-elect could announce this loan pool at any time during first 100 days, fund it through her first budget, and issue the first loans to microlending partners on January 1.

### **How these ideas promote equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation**

All three of these ideas are grounded in the Mayor-elect's core values, by:

- providing equity to every neighborhood regardless of the effectiveness of the local alderman by grouping communities together into natural micro-economies for investment purposes,
- creating clarity on how investment decisions are made,
- holding developers and community leaders accountable for what they propose and why (while challenging those who protest what they're against to also explain what they're for),
- including everyone who wishes to participate in the planning process, and
- transforming our two-tier investments into one planning framework that works for all.

Please let me know if I can provide further detail on these ideas or help the transition team in any way. I would also be delighted to host discussions or events either before or after the inauguration at [The Hatchery](#), our new food and beverage incubator in Garfield Park that opened in January on the West Side. Thank you for your work in helping the Mayor-elect prepare for a successful start to her tenure.





# Local Union No. 9

## International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers AFL-CIO

William W. Niesman  
Business Manager

Brian M. Lewis  
Financial Secretary

### MEMO

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Bill Niesman, Business Manager IBEW Local 9

**PROMPT:** Ensure all individuals have opportunities to participate in the region's economic vitality

**INITIATIVE:** Building pipelines to career paths through a partnership between business and labor focusing on outreach and education.

Since assuming the position of Business Manager of IBEW Local 9 a little over three years ago, my team and I have taken a series of action items to help further the progress of our union. The majority of our focus has revolved around the education of our membership and the community we serve as well as outreach and recruitment. We have directed a large portion of our time and effort in working throughout the greater Chicagoland area, especially in disadvantaged neighborhoods to build a pipeline into our local. We have done this by attending various outreach programs and working with numerous high schools and churches. The Local 9 team is very proud of their accomplishments in this field and feel it can be a solid model to build a larger and more efficient program that can be expanded to encompass the entire city. If all of labor and business work together toward this goal, all parties involved will benefit. This partnership can help ensure that individuals from all walks of life have the opportunity to not only participate but to benefit in our city's economic vitality.

In today's reality, labor unions and businesses alike strive to hire and maintain a diverse workforce and to open the doors of opportunity. An opportunity to not just land a job, but to secure a career. The unfortunate part is that a lot of the time, although doing great things for the community, these two institutions are working independent of each other and missing the full potential and opportunity that can be created through a solid partnership. The groups you have on this committee can and will strive to work together to share all our ideas in a progressive manner to build a program that works for all of Chicago.

Together we can work to maintain accessibility and outreach to all neighborhoods by hosting a minimum of four town hall meetings per year, scattered throughout the city. We can work with the high schools to host more career days and strive to institute vocational classes that can open up the student's eyes to opportunities in the business

world and within organized labor. This can be something we can continue to grow in the future and actually benefit a measurable achievement.

The challenges we will face moving forward is making sure our message is not only heard, but that it is delivered equally throughout the city and communities. We also have to make sure there is adequate job opportunities as we host career days, town hall meetings, work hardening programs and job fairs. The quickest way for the community and residents to lose interest and trust in this initiative is when they step up and dedicate their time and resources to these programs and then the program falls short by not providing any type of employment opportunity. I have seen first hand situations in which there are two to three times as many candidates attending classes and work hardening programs as there are positions available. This creates a negative attitude in the participants and an unwillingness to participate in other programs.

If we all work together and are honest about the opportunities available, I believe we can design the best program for all of our city residents.



## MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 15, 2019  
TO: Mayor Elect Lori Lightfoot  
FROM: Brenda Palms Barber, President and CEO, North Lawndale Employment Network and Sweet Beginnings, LLC; Chair, Workforce Committee, North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council  
RE: Transition Committee - Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development

**POTENTIAL INITIATIVE:** Reduce the racial wealth gap by eliminating barriers to employment experienced primarily – but not exclusively – by African American men, especially those with criminal backgrounds.

We propose to advance this initiative through three specific strategies identified through decades of working to train and employ this population:

- 1) Eliminate a significant barrier to entering the workforce by offering a debt forgiveness, reduction, or repayment slowdown program for city debt and child support payments for very low income individuals, so high levels of debt are not a deterrent to legitimate work.
- 2) Make transportation to jobs across the city and into the suburbs affordable or free for those newly entering the workforce.
- 3) Extend the duration of Transitional Jobs from 90 days to six months.

**INFUSING VALUES:** The new administration should develop a set of guidelines to steer all new policy decisions that reflect these values and use these guidelines as a measuring stick when making important decisions. It will be important to include listening to the voice of very low-income people, those facing significant barriers to employment, and those living in communities with high rates of violence – including victims and perpetrators, as often these are one and the same.

**WHAT WE NEED TO KEEP:** We need to keep, support, and expand the successes of community based workforce development programs that offer Transitional Jobs and supports, such as the North Lawndale Employment Network, Bright Endeavors, Jane Addams Resource Corporation, Safer Foundation, Inspiration Corporation, CARA, and others, along with new programs that are showing signs of success but still in pilot form such as Chicago CRED by the Emerson Collective, led by Arne Duncan, and the Rapid Employment And Development Initiative (READI), led by the Heartland Alliance. Both of these programs tackle violence through employment. The city needs to continue to provide these organizations with funding – including for public transportation subsidies – and offer ticket amnesty days, but also examine who these amnesties are helping the most and find ways to expand upon them.

**THE NEXT 100 DAYS:** Within the first 100 days we recommend the new administration immediately freeze penalties on city debt for low income people who are engaged in workforce development programs and/or in their first 90 days of employment. This will keep debt from accruing as a result of a person's low income – effectively another poor tax – and give the new administration time to develop a policy on the issue.

**LONGER-TERM IMPLEMENTATION:**

- 1) *Eliminate a significant barrier to entering the workforce by offering a debt forgiveness, reduction, or repayment slowdown program for city debt and child support payments for very low income individuals, so high levels of debt are not a deterrent to legitimate work.***

Debt for child support, traffic or parking tickets, and other city fines can accrue exponentially for someone who has been unemployed for years or has time spent incarcerated. While a working class or middle income person may have to make a sacrifice to pay off a \$100 ticket, this amount is insurmountable for the unemployed and quickly balloons astronomically. Because government agencies have the ability to garnish wages, this becomes a major disincentive for legitimate work.

We suggest a program to incentivize work for people in this situation by initially deferring repayment during the first six months of work so the new worker can stabilize his finances. After that, a program that matches a worker's payments toward the debt 1-1 or even 1-4, prioritizing child support and any payments enabling a worker to become a legal driver again – restoring a driver's license and/or retrieving a booted or confiscated vehicle needed for transportation to work. With a matching program, the debt is paid, not waived, and provides an incentive to work and to pay down the debt.

- 2) *Make transportation to jobs across the city and into the suburbs affordable or free for those newly entering the workforce***

A significant barrier to work for those attempting to enter the workforce after many years with very little or no income is transportation. The time when this is the greatest problem is the first two to four weeks of employment, when the new worker has work-related expenses (such as a uniform or tools, child care costs) and has not yet received a first paycheck. This is exacerbated by the fact that many good jobs are located well outside the service area of public transportation, and so are very expensive to reach without a car.

We propose a transportation subsidy and/or program for new workers that would last at a minimum until the first paycheck but ideally for two months, allowing the participant to stabilize his finances and budget for transportation. A subsidy could be paid to employers for providing transportation or to nonprofits serving workers entering the workforce. These entities, in turn, would offer transportation programs to ensure new workers can get to work. To help fund this, we also propose a payback program, where once stabilized in the job, the participating worker would pay into the fund – either covering her or his own costs for continued participation or simply “donating” towards transportation for others who need it once he has a car or some other means of transport.

One avenue could be a partnership with Uber or Lyft, which already employ a “pool” option to reduce costs for riders. A city partnership or subsidy could ensure that even long distances are affordable for riders and possibly develop set routes for specific workers to rideshare. Concerns about these companies' employer practices would be alleviated by applying specific rules for participating. Another model that could be explored and expanded is the Taxi Access Program (TAP) that allows paratransit customers to ride in taxis at reduced rates and the Emergency Medical Transportation Service, also currently serving the elderly and those experiencing disabilities.

- 3) *Extend the duration of Transitional Jobs from 90 days to six months***

Transitional Jobs are time-limited, subsidized, paid jobs combined with job skills training and supportive services to help individuals facing barriers to employment succeed in the workforce. They ensure a new



worker with multiple barriers to employment has the training and supports needed to transition into the workforce. The benefits of transitional jobs are well-documented,<sup>1</sup> including the opportunity to stabilize with income, learn experientially, address barriers, build work history, access incentives, develop skills, and transition to permanent employment.<sup>2</sup> These programs positively contribute to the economic health of employers by lowering the cost of hiring new employees, increasing business productivity, financial well-being, and customer satisfaction.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is clear to those workforce agencies that have been providing Transitional Jobs – such as the North Lawndale Employment Network and others listed above – that the prevalent model of 90 days of subsidized work is insufficient to attach those with the most significant barriers to the workforce. More time in a structured environment is needed for a new worker to fully acclimate to the workforce and the rigors of daily work. New habits are just starting to stick and finances are barely stabilizing. These individuals have been subjected to high levels of trauma, lack family support, oftentimes have been incarcerated, and have never been a part of a community where most adults work.

**CHALLENGES:** As with any attempt to move people out of poverty, the biggest challenge will be funding these strategies. However, the City of Chicago is wealthy. If racial economic equity were to be a priority, funding could be identified. If the city can find \$2.25 billion in incentives to offer to Amazon to add jobs and strengthen the local economy, the city can also find funding for initiatives to return low-income people to the local economy. There will be pushback from those who do not understand the root causes of poverty, unemployment, and crime, and therefore do not believe those living in these conditions are deserving of assistance. Together we must educate those willing to listen and move forward regardless of the position of those who will not. Aligning budget to values is the only way to achieve economic parity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation.

*These recommendations are based on nearly 20 years of helping people attach to the labor market. Chicago's North Lawndale Employment Network (NLEN) is a workforce development nonprofit whose mission is to improve the earnings potential of community residents through innovative employment initiatives that lead to economic advancement and an improved quality of life. We have been serving job-seekers, with a special focus on individuals returning from incarceration, for 17 years. We launched the Sweet Beginnings social enterprise in 2004 to provide our clients with Transitional Jobs. To date, we have helped over 2,700 people enter the workforce and have directly employed nearly 500 through Sweet Beginnings.*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://socialimpactresearchcenter.issuelab.org/resource/michigan-earn-and-learn-an-impact-outcome-and-implementation-evaluation-of-a-transitional-job-and-training-program.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://nationalinitiatives.issuelab.org/resource/transitional-jobs-under-wioa-better-serving-chronically-unemployed-jobseekers.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.heartlandalliance.org/nationalinitiatives/our-initiatives/faq/>



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**TO: MAYOR-ELECT LORI LIGHTFOOT**

**FROM: BETSY ZIEGLER, CEO, 1871**

**PROMPT:** Ensure all individuals have opportunities to participate in the region's economic vitality.

**NEW INITIATIVE:** Employ a partnership approach to equip, inspire, and support entrepreneurs through all of the city's 77 neighborhoods.

Over the last few years, both the nation and the city have experienced a relatively unique phenomenon, where the number of companies being born each day match those going out of business. 95%+ of new job creation comes from small businesses. If, as a city, our small business engine is broken, our platform for job creation is also broken. The businesses that are dying at a faster rate are very local; hair salons, barber shops, florists, restaurants, dry cleaners.

We believe that entrepreneurial talent and aspiration is everywhere – but opportunity and access are not. 1871, as a leading non-profit supporting the launch of new digital businesses is uniquely positioned to help drive a trajectory change in launching successful new businesses in Chicago's neighborhoods. We know that many entrepreneurs will never enter the Merchandise Mart for any number of reasons and that's okay – through local partnerships, we can come to them. We have been operational for seven years and in that time, we have established a record of impact with ~700 startup alumni continuing to thrive (57% overall success rate), the creation of over 11,500 jobs, and \$1.4+ Billion in capital raised.

If you look across our neighborhoods (e.g., Woodlawn, Rogers Park, Englewood, Austin), many have a localized version of 1871 serving the needs of their aspiring entrepreneurs. These operations are being led by phenomenal people who are helping dozens of residents launch businesses of all types; food, tech, and services just to name a few. In conversations with these leaders, the opportunity for 1871 to serve as a partner has become a routine topic. We have several unique capabilities that could be scaled to support any entrepreneur solving any number of business issues (tech or not) and delivered through community partnerships. These capabilities include digitizing our curriculum (~400 workshops per year); creating live streaming access into select events; virtualizing our mentor platform; supporting business development; co-grant writing; doing pop-up workshops; and co-branding local events, content creation, etc.



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By combining the local knowledge and relationships of the neighborhood incubators and pairing it with 1871's assets at scale, we jointly believe we could 10x the impact that we would have working in our silos. This will work best if on a "pull" system, where the local organization pulls on 1871 to leverage our resources and capabilities for the assets they need to thrive. Our partnerships may look different from one ward to another depending on neighborhood priorities. Over time, we could imagine this system extending to partnerships with each local Chamber, the Chicago Public Library system, the penitentiary system, and as appropriate, Chicago Community Colleges.

This initiative reinforces most – if not all – of the values outlined in the campaign including: equity, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and the opportunity for significant transformation.

Moving forward, we will be forging relationships with a number of partners; in fact, we are very close to launching a few pop-up workshops focused on female entrepreneurs in 3-5 neighborhoods. We will be leveraging all of the existing assets and proven approaches in both the neighborhoods and at 1871.

We believe with Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's leadership, commitment, and vision, we can move faster and further to establish this as a leading program to ignite and amplify new business creation – which will serve to bolster job creation across the city. In the next 100 days, encouragement and support from the Mayor's office for local chambers and incubators with whom we are not connected with, will help us engage in the conversation about how 1871, and our local partnerships, could catalyze greater business development along with how the network among local incubators can drive awareness, investment, and access to customers (corporate and consumer).

From a challenge perspective, there are three that we are thinking through: ongoing access to funding for the local initiatives and the entrepreneurs (as noted in the original memo, this is an initiative on its own), persistent focus and accountability as this will take time to be successful, and clarity in the scope and inclusive approach to this initiative vs. splintered efforts that dilute potential impact. All of these can be mitigated with thoughtful planning and dialogue.

Thank you for your consideration, and both myself and the team at 1871 look forward to working together to support your economic development agenda.



**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Cherita Ellens, CEO – Women Employed

**Proposed Initiative:** Increase financial prosperity & security for low income earners.

Close to 50% of Chicago's residents are either low income, at the poverty level or living in extreme poverty. There isn't just one program, initiative or policy that will change this. We need to enact a suite of policies and laws that promote gender and racial equity and that enable more women and people of color in Chicago, who are over-represented in the low-paid workforce, to achieve financial prosperity/security.

- **Pass the Chicago Fair Workweek Ordinance:** Too many working people in Chicago—especially in low-paid industries — face unstable and unpredictable work schedules. The Chicago Fair Workweek ordinance would provide protections—fair notice of scheduling, as well as compensation if hours are cut or added at the last minute—to all hourly workers, and to salaried workers who earn less than \$50,000 a year.
- **Increase Chicago's minimum wage AND enact One Fair Wage:** We need to get to a \$15 minimum wage by 2021 (4 years sooner than 2025 mandated by the new state legislation). As cited by the National Employment Law Project of Economic Policy Institute's Family Budget Calculator, the living wage in Chicago for an adult with one child is just over \$28/hour. The current wage of \$12/hour, which will max out at \$13/hour on July 1, continues to cause severe disparities among communities on the south and west sides. Increasing wages more quickly will improve financial stability and strengthen communities. Additionally, we need **One Fair Wage** to end the sub-minimum tipped wage in our city—something that the Illinois minimum wage increase will not do. The sub-minimum tipped wage leaves the people of color and women who are overrepresented in tipped jobs financially disadvantaged and less secure.
- **Close Chicago's racial achievement gaps in higher education** by providing better supports to individuals seeking to attain certifications and degrees. City Colleges of Chicago need more resources to expand support services to help accelerate progress in bridge programs, and in the attainment of degrees and stackable credentials. Additionally, ensuring that the more than 24,500 residents (87% of whom are people of color) in adult education programs in City Colleges and thousands more served by community organizations throughout Chicago are adequately resourced and funded. These programs are a vital driver of economic growth and economic development in our city's neighborhoods, and they need access to the funding necessary to meet the need.

*It's up to us.*



#### What is happening today that we need to keep:

- City of Chicago should remain progressive in its “good jobs” policies, and workplace protections. City of Chicago’s minimum tipped wages has increased the state’s \$4.95/hour tipped wage, and the minimum wage will go to \$13/hour on July 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be the last increase until the state catches up, and then the city will be required to increase at the same rate as the state until 2025, when we’ll reach \$15 as per the state law.
- Continue to involve a broad coalition of working people, civic leaders, labor, and the business community in conversations/negotiations around Fair Workweek Chicago ordinance to ensure the ordinance takes their concerns into account and has the support of business.
- City Colleges of Chicago has implemented bridge programs in several high-demand industries. We need to continue to evaluate and evolve bridge programs to ensure they meet the needs and deliver the intended outcomes of enrollment in and attainment of college-level courses, stackable credentials, and degrees. Simultaneously, continue and expand the work a dozen community-based organizations offer Career Foundations, a career & education planning course, that allows adults to make an informed choice about their best-fit career sector and plot an education plan to advance into a career.

#### What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

- Pass the Chicago Fair Workweek ordinance.
- Draft an ordinance to increase the city’s minimum wage to \$15/hour by 2021 and eliminate the sub-minimum tipped wage.
- Promote Career Foundations & bridge programs and provide resources to expand programs in community organizations.

#### What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

- Increase the minimum wage to \$14/hour in 2020 and \$15 in 2021.
- Eliminate the subminimum tipped wage.
- Increase funding for support services for city residents in City Colleges, adult education and bridge programming.
- Convene the leaders of all of Chicago’s colleges and universities to discuss strategies to close the racial achievement gap.

#### What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

- While Chicago’s min wage ordinance increased Illinois’s tipped wage - to \$6.25 currently - eliminating the subminimum wage, like Seattle and San Francisco have done, will encounter strong opposition from influential Illinois Restaurant Association – who are more likely to support a minimum wage increase than they are to eliminate the subminimum tipped wage. There is similar opposition from various industries for the Fair Work Week Ordinance as well.

*It's up to us.*

April 14, 2019

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Chris Gladwin

As a part of the work of the Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee here are some of my thoughts on realizing the objectives outlined in your campaign.

### ***Promoting regional economic growth***

The great growth opportunity for Chicago is to grow beyond just local markets to become more competitive in national and global markets which not only adds net economic gain to our region, but also creates more demand for local goods and services by adding earnings to the region. The great opportunity that Chicago has to increase its national and global competitiveness is to advance our economy in the coming decades into a information technology and applied technology leader. I'm a part of P33, a team of hundreds of Chicago's business, civic, education, and government leaders who have come together to plan and ultimately realize this opportunity. As a result, my and our detailed thoughts on how to best promote inclusive economic growth are embodied in P33 and we would be happy to provide briefings and a review of the materials we've created at P33.

### ***Ensuring all neighborhoods benefit from growth***

In order for each neighborhood to participate in growth, a large number of members from each neighborhood need to participate in both the growth of both their local businesses as well as to participate in national and global market opportunities. Chicago has one of the best platforms in the world for creating businesses with national and global reach:

- Chicago is the most educated large city in the US and produces the second-most college graduates of any US city
- Chicago has the most diverse large economy in the US which enables a broad range of both new and established economic organizations.
- Chicago has a transportation infrastructure that not only supports global and national commerce with the busiest airport and rail network in the US, but also a regional transportation system that enable employers to draw on the full breadth of Chicagoland's labor pool.

However, for Chicago's economic growth to be truly inclusive, more and more of the people in all of Chicago's neighborhoods need to participate in Chicago's big economic opportunity to reach national and global markets as a leading tech city. Just enabling Chicagoans to find opportunities for businesses and careers in their own neighborhood is important but enabling Chicagoans from all neighborhoods to utilize Chicago's capabilities to create and realize

economic opportunities that are national and global in their scope is needed for Chicago's economic growth to be truly inclusive.

***Ensuring all individuals have opportunities to participate in the region's economic vitality***

Real opportunities in a competitive 21<sup>st</sup> century economy require real expertise - there's no solution to opportunity participation that doesn't include an educational foundation. That education can take many forms, including adaptive education, technology internships, and apprenticeships, but education *is* the path that leads to expertise that leads to opportunity. The recent improvements in CPS have been important, but my recommendation would be to go much farther by expanding the school year and increasing the focus on learning computer science as well as computing – the application of information technology across all fields. Computer science is a language and is best learned at a young age. Plus, computing applies to every future career and is the key driver of future economic opportunity in each field in the US economy in the coming decades.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Gladwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Gladwin" clearly distinguishable.

Chris Gladwin  
CEO, Ocident  
Co-Chair, P33

**Date:** April 15, 2019

**From:** Charmaine V. Rickette, President  
Uncle Remus Saucy Fried Chicken

**Committee:** Business, Neighborhood and Economic Development

**As a committed Chicagoan Business Owner, and Advocate, I am appreciative of this opportunity to be apart of a transition team that represent and I hope maintain Intentional change and growth for our underserved communities. I have read Mayor-Elect attached plan. It's ambitious and achievable if the administration stay engaged with the community organizations and business owners that have boots to ground daily advocating for better. Listed below are a few of my many recommendations I have for the new administration to achieve their goals toward a Better Chicago.**

**Execution:**

The new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion and transformation in this initiative by recruiting the local neighborhood business associations to execute these meetings – i.e. on the West Side the Austin African American Business Networking Association and The Chatham Avalon Business Association. These groups can identify the venues and help get the businesses invited to attend. Local resources including caterers should be recruited for these meetings as well.

**Additional Information:**

- Keep the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund
  - The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund has been a winner for the West and South Side Communities. The program needs to be kept and expanded. This will create the now diminished and Much needed revitalization of Community Economic Drivers. I'm open to making it a grant only program however, with limited restrictions.
- **Business Town Hall Meetings need to happen within the first 100 days of the new administration.**
  - A minimum of 1000 business owners need to be heard with their



- recommendations on a tracked document.
- A Council of Neighborhood Business Associations can be created longer term.
    - Similar to the Committee of Chambers, a unified group of neighborhood business associations should be formed with quarterly meetings established. City Departments and dedicated resources should be provided to this group.
  - Neighborhood small businesses are challenged with lack of manpower and resources to be away from their businesses.
    - Incorporate meeting for business owners at time that is most convenient for them – weekday after the business rush hour like 3-7 pm
  - Vast Improvements' are needed throughout the Business and Consumer Affairs Department as it relates to Small Business Compliance. I've seen some positive changes but have also accumulated quite a bit of frustration and horror stories during my over 30 years in business. Currently some legislation is not small business friendly.
  - **West and South Side Communities need Intentional Energy and Resources directed toward Infrastructure to their Neighborhoods.**
  - Opportunity Zones need special committee designation to navigate the nuisances of this Program.
  - The City of Detroit is a great example of rebuilding. Appointing a Special Committee to go and study their turnaround strategy would be great to consider for our growth plan.

**Lastly, it is my hope that there is at minimum a quarterly update, accountability meeting and or report for each of these initiatives you have outlined in you Plan.**

### **Transition Memo:**

- Create destination business districts that attract city residents and visitors outside of the downtown central business area; ones that celebrate the diversity of the city. Support the exploration and accessibility of the city with robust transportation and marketing plans, understanding that doing so will drive and help sustain revenue.
- Be upfront about deep-rooted, systemic issues facing the city, and focus on solutions instead of problems. Utilize a scorecard that outlines metrics (unemployment, school graduation rates, housing values, police encounters, crime statistics, average wages, etc.) for each of the 77 neighborhoods or 50 wards and publish it. While the information is already out there, making it easily available and digestible in one place by a broad base of city residents is important. Keep it updated at regular intervals to show progress or lack thereof. Plan to continuously communicate with community in person to discuss and determine outcomes and solutions where necessary. This regular report should include a return on human investment that recognizes increased job readiness and attainment, lower incarceration rates, and the economic benefit from those kinds of improving statistics.

Create a new branding plan to lift up and communicate effectively the value in Chicago's history and diversity. This will also serve to help counter the crime and segregation statistics for which the city is generally known. It is crucial to whole city economic development to rewrite the narrative about communities beyond the central business district. The full narrative of the city's history or promise has never fully been conveyed. Chicago like many large cities, has a "Chinatown" and a "Greektown" located within proximity to the loop, visitors and residents of those areas are provided with insight in to the value of the city's immigrant history. The south and west sides of the city are, however, largely ignored, and the ethnic and historic treasures of the vast diversity in the remainder of Chicago goes largely unnoticed and are untapped. As such they are diminished.

- Anchor institution investments in neighborhoods such as Englewood and Woodlawn begin to recognize the needs of those communities. However, creating and growing wealth in underserved communities requires that the dollars spent in those institutions stay and recirculate in those communities. While there is some question about the validity of circulation statistics, the idea that the long term viability of even anchor institutions depends on the neighborhood's ability to sustain them. So, the ability of a neighborhood business district to attract dollars from the outside that were not there before is essential for wealth accumulation, growth, and intergenerational wealth transfer.

In the first 100 days, a qualitative, quantitative, and participative baseline assessment of each neighborhood would be important to see where investment is most needed and the wholistic supports that would make wealth accumulation and small business development stable and sustainable. Start to get the input from community residents on what they see as the greatest barriers to employment and business startup. Bring together educational, police, housing, and corporate citizens to determine how investments in a wider variety of communities can be made

with the greatest impact.

The value of engaging all parts of the city in targeted community development will be critical. The one thing that is different about Chicago than many other large cities is the diversity of business sectors represented in our corporate community. Their ability to locate essential business functions outside of traditional locations is central to a plan to recognizing the value of all Chicago and returning to a more historic model for Chicago development. Additionally, determining what would draw people to other parts of the city, how those areas could be branded and developed would have to work hand in hand. For example, a technology hub doesn't have to be located in the loop or Fulton Market, it could just as easily be an "anchor" creating wealth and traffic and surrounding services in any of a dozen underdeveloped neighborhoods. Getting the corporate community to recognize the long-term value in this will take time to develop an inclusive model and culture of good corporate citizenship. With a current plan for over \$16 billion dollars of investment to be spent between O'Hare airport and Lincoln Yards, there seems to be little or no plans for neighborhoods that currently struggle. Refocusing activity and commensurate types of investment throughout the city will be important to long term growth and sustainability.

Changing hearts and minds is a monumental process. Long-term practices have created a stigma attached to many neighborhoods that allows people to think that their current condition is the result of their unwillingness to "do better". This is simply not true.

Often times, checking the box of a charitable donation to address a problem rather than truly investing in the core issues makes people feel better, but the problem continues to develop and deteriorate. Doing the hard work to get people to believe in transformational investment will be critical to the success of a strategic investment plan. Additionally, addressing the wholistic needs of long term underserved communities will require that we treat not only the current outcomes, but stop the pipeline of problems at the same time.

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Member, Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Transition Committee

**Recommendation:** Create the Chicago Equitable Development Program to incentivize contributions by companies to Chicago's under-resourced communities.

**Detail:** Currently companies requesting development concessions for development in downtown Chicago are required to put dollars into the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, which are then reinvested in small businesses. I recommend broadening that approach in following ways:

- Condition the approvals of all tax abatements and development concessions across the city on companies contributing to equitable development.
- Create a menu of Equitable Development options, including but not limited to:
  - HIRE INCLUSIVELY or DEVELOP TALENT (e.g. Source interns/ apprentices and/or hire from areas designated as an Opportunity Zone; Participate in One Summer Chicago; Advise City Colleges on future of work in their industry; Invest in programs to expand labor market access);
  - INVEST in an EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND that would support small businesses (removing match requirement) and larger scale developments in the areas designated as an Opportunity Zones.

**Rationale:** In addition to the important moral reasons to address economic and racial segregation, there are strong economic ones. It is now known that more inclusive economies lead toward more innovation and faster growth. (See: Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren; CMAP's Inclusive Growth Strategy Paper).

**Background:** A handful of other cities have adopted equitable development incentive approaches. One example from Portland, OR:

The Portland Enterprise Zone incentivizes firms to invest major capital outlays and to create or retain quality jobs by allowing for property tax exemptions designed to encourage existing and new businesses. Managed by Prosper Portland, it defines a public benefit agreement as a legally binding agreement between a governmental organization and a business with the goal of creating shared value and partnership, where the competitiveness of a company and the health of the public are interdependent. This is distinct from a community benefit agreement, which is typically designed as a place-based agreement. The benefit agreement outlines the level of incentive the firm will receive and the expected outcomes. Among other factors, these outcomes include:

- Threshold levels for wages (\$15 per hour within one year) or total compensation (\$20 per hour within one year)
- A business procurement plan that outlines good faith efforts to localize supply chain purchases, specifically from business owned by people of color or business owners located in designated neighborhoods
- A contribution of 15 percent of tax savings to a Workforce Training and Business Development Fund (WTBDF) and Employee Support Fund (ESF).

The WTBDF provides the economic development team with a flexible fund that supports programming to build an equitable economy and that enhances economic and social opportunity through partnerships with existing systems related to filling worker skills gaps, business technical assistance (e.g. lean consulting, business planning, etc.), and other firm-specific needs. The fund can be responsive to the needs of existing businesses in addition to providing incentives for new entrants. The ESF is similar in its flexibility but it specifically allows Prosper Portland to work with employers to address two of the most significant barriers to employment for lower income workers: transit and child care support.

**Alignment with Values:**

*Equity:* The Program is designed to redistribute resources and opportunities to benefit under-resourced communities living in designated Opportunity Zones.

*Transparency and Accountability:* The Program could bring needed transparency and accountability to the current system of tax abatements and other economic development incentives by setting up clear rules and sharing the investments publicly.

*Diversity and inclusion:* The Program would support companies to diversify their talent pools and dollars would support diverse-led companies to access capital to grow.

*Transformation:* The Program creates a vehicle for public-private co-investment, unlocking private resources, incentivizes inclusive hiring, and seeks to reverse a long track record in the city of investment downtown and North side to the exclusion of other parts of the city.

### **Stock Take:**

What is happening today that we need to keep: This idea is adapted from current Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: Announce commitment to idea and kick off process to determine details (process could include Task Force representing business and community).

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: To launch the program, you would need to determine a) City capacity to manage; b) creation of menu; c) system for tracking and reporting; and d) approval from City Council. Long-term you would hope to see strong economic activity in under-resourced communities and market investment. If very successful, it may need to be paired with policies to prevent gentrification.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

- Tracking and reporting will be complicated.
- Right sizing the requirements and incentives so as to a) not discourage companies from looking to Chicago for location and expansion; and b) not encourage companies to only put dollars into a Fund for ease instead of participating in other meaningful ways such as hiring.
- Capacity of the nonprofits and institutions may be limited to develop investable deals in the short-term. There are a few nascent efforts underway to build capacity (more info available from: LISC, Community Reinvestment Fund, and BCG).

**Other Considerations:** Some cities are layering city-level efforts to take advantage of federal Opportunity Zone (OZ) policy which may be worth exploring to determine if there are other tax approaches to drive equitable development. See Accelerator for America and Nowak Metro Finance Lab cohort of cities working on OZ "investment prospectuses." Also, Baltimore has a public Neighborhood Impact Investment Fund to compliment OZ (and other) investments and CDFI capacity with "a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy to support the growth of local, minority and women-owned businesses and to promote the hiring of Baltimore City residents."

To: Mayor-elect Lightfoot

From: David Merriman, Professor UIC and member Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee

Re: Initiative memo    Date: April 13, 2019

- A potential initiative: **Funding Infrastructure Together (FIT)** would explicitly allocate a share of property tax revenue generated from real estate appreciation in the city's most affluent areas to a fund that would be used to pay for infrastructure investment in the city's most economically disconnected regions.
- Infusing new values into Chicago's economic development initiatives
  - Equity: Much of Chicago's current and past effort to fund infrastructure investment was focused around TIF. TIF essentially privatizes revenue generated by appreciation of real estate and funnels additional revenues back to the areas that are generating them. This results in well-off areas becoming more well off. This proposed initiative, to be called **FIT** (TIF spelled backward), would stand TIF on its head. FIT would direct a portion of the public revenue generated by real estate appreciation to a special fund that would be used to finance economic development in Chicago's most economically disconnected regions in order to assist areas that have seen the least benefit from economic growth.
  - Accountability: Chicago's current TIF program is largely ad hoc with TIF monies focused on developer initiatives that are often removed from, and sometimes inconsistent with, long-term goals and strategies. FIT would be accountable to a well crafted long term plan. The Lightfoot administration should quickly undertake a review of Chicago's Capital Improvement Program and should develop a capital budgeting process that is infused with the new administration's objectives. FIT should be a central part of the implementation of the capital improvement plan. FIT should be regularly and independently evaluated to determine whether it is contributing to the implementation of the City's articulated economic development vision.
  - Transparency: The process by which FIT revenues are spent should be well articulated and communicated in written form. Spending priorities should be highly consistent with the Administration's overall goals and strategies and should be explicitly articulated. The new administration should develop a publicly assessible dashboard that shows where FIT money is generated and spent. The data should include be mapable and should contain specific detail on highly disaggregated expenditures. Data should be provided on a regular and timely basis.
  - Diversity and Inclusion: Every aspect of the FIT program should be developed and implemented with diverse and inclusive public input. This might build on and expand the current hyper-democratic participatory budgeting process that has been developed in several wards of the city. But diversity and inclusion should also go beyond ward-based politics to bring together diverse groups from across neighborhoods to develop a united vision of a City with a thriving downtown and strong and growing neighborhoods. The implementation of the FIT program should also be diverse and inclusive. Minority and women-owned firms should be major service providers and should be particularly favored in the neighborhoods they know best. Community groups should be involved in the

design of neighborhood investment and should also play a role in choosing and monitoring service providers.

- Transformation: Chicago's historic unbalanced development patterns will take determination and persistence to transform. The FIT program embodies a vision that encapsulates transformation by sharing the tremendous wealth generated by Chicago's productive and diverse labor force, natural amenities, and strong cultural traditions in a new and more equitable manner. In order to successfully transform the city the FIT initiative must be part of a broader program that includes public safety, education, transportation, public health and many other areas.
- Advancing this initiative
  - What is happening today and what we need to keep: Progressive advocates have pushed for concepts like those behind FIT for many years. The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund shares some of the wealth created by downtown construction projects with neighborhoods on the West, Southwest and South sides of Chicago and embodies some of the same *value capture* philosophy as the proposed FIT initiative. This Neighborhood Opportunity Fund should be evaluated and restructured, expanded or reduced as appropriate. Similarly, programs that support affordable housing and other community benefits from market rate development should be considered holistically and should work in tandem with the FIT initiative.
  - What we need to implement in the next 100 days: The administration should survey other large cities for models like the FIT initiative. Legal teams should identify potential legal barriers to the FIT initiative and the Department of Development and Planning should work with the Office of the County Assessor and County Clerk to determine how much revenue FIT might generate. The idea should be widely discussed with downtown and neighborhood developers, community groups and others. The goal should be a 100<sup>th</sup> day announcement of specific proposals to begin a small-scale FIT program.
  - Plan for longer-term implementation: If the initial small-scale implementation of the FIT program goes well the administration should expand the program and it should become a major vehicle to fund development in the most economically disconnected parts of the city. The administration should work closely with the Cook County Assessor's office to assure that property tax administration is done in a fair, timely and transparent manner to increase the perceived legitimacy of the FIT program.
  - Challenges: Economic development in the City of Chicago has long been centered around TIF and perceived of as an ad hoc, neighborhood-based process with strong aldermanic prerogatives. Changing this mindset to think holistically about the city's economic development could generate political opposition from both downtown and neighborhood leaders. The administration must balance its genuine desire for swift and fundamental transformation against the need to demonstrate new concepts and build coalitions for change. Also, real estate development is notoriously sensitive to economic cycles. Should the next recession hit soon and be severe, deteriorating economic conditions could slow development to a crawl and greatly diminish the pool of revenue that might be

available through appreciation. By design Cook County's property tax assessment system lags current values and averages assessments over several years and should dampen the near-term damage that might be done by a recession. Nonetheless the administration should be cognizant of the potential for changing economic conditions.



## Memo

**To:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**Name:** Dawveed Scully – Skidmore, Owings and Merrill LLP (SOM)

**Transition Committee:** Business, Neighborhood, Economic Development

**Prompt:** What we need to implement immediately; or within the next year

Creating a shared platform for an equitable growth in Chicago that informs, organizes, and aligns community, developers, and potential resources.

There are two key things we need to do immediately to make a more transparent, accountable, equitable, and diverse city.

First, we need to empower people by building a shared understanding and knowledge of the development process and how we can work together to achieve an outcome that benefits all. There's a need to create a knowledge base and more transparency about the investment and development process in the city.

- **History of planning in Chicago** – We need to talk about how racist planning and policy have shaped the condition of our city, to understand the issues we are working to address.
- **Information gathering and tools** – Residents need to understand where we they can learn about what's going on with development in the city, and we should develop a central repository for this.
- **Principles and best practices in urban planning and design**
- **Planning for growth** – What are some basic real estate and development concepts that folks need to know and basics of TIF, Neighborhood Opportunity fund, Retail Thrive etc.
- **Urban strategies and tactics** – Incremental growth, low cost/high impact projects, micro-retail and popup, adaptive reuse, and opportunities for creative
- **Sustainable and resilient neighborhoods** – Water, energy, and food and sustainable principles.

These sessions can be held at a key place over the city and recorded and put online for future viewing. This is based off a series we did with 1 Woodlawn which was helpful for residents to provide a knowledge base and empower residents to collective action in their communities.

Secondly, there is a need for an overall city vision and implementation plan so that everyone knows what's going on, what the opportunities are, and what the plan is for the future.

**Start by organizing the city into logical planning areas based on key elements such as rivers, transit, interstates, nodes, corridors and major centers that may overlap wards and contain multiple neighborhoods.**

**Build an online tool that identifies key assets and opportunities all over the city.**

- City of Chicago and Cook County data
  - Vacant lots - ownership
  - Vacant buildings
  - Current developments
  - Building Permits
  - Funding sources for each area
- Neighborhood assets (various sources) ,retail, transit, parks, anchor institutions
- Institute for Housing studies, MPC, CMAP, LISC and many others can be combined into one space. It should be where all current project information as well as current and past community plans and ideas.

**Leveraging this to understand at a city scale:**

- Key nodes/areas of focus (Equitable-TOD, recent investments, anchor institutions, major job centers)
- Key sectors for investment for city and region
- Neighborhood interests
- Timelines and key dates for decision making

This will take some effort but is necessary to create an environment that is built on transparent, equitable and accountable environment. We have the public sector, non-profit, institutional, private sector and philanthropic resources to accomplish this in the city, if we work in a coordinated and collaborative manner.



To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Darnell Shields, Executive Director of Austin Coming Together

RE: Ensure all neighborhoods benefit from regional economic growth

**Reform and Expand the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF): Leveraging proven neighborhood organizations leading community-wide economic development efforts to inform how the NOF is structured and invested across the city.**

Successful neighborhood investment is typically driven from the ground up, with a focus on leveraging existing assets, meaningful community engagement and system-wide guidelines to prevent discrimination and inequity. Currently, there are no citywide efforts to map and share information about assets in each neighborhood, or create guiding priorities at the neighborhood level for development or land use decision-making.

The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF), launched in 2016 by the City provides grants in the form of a rebate for cost incurred to develop real estate; rehabilitate real estate; and support new or expanding businesses or cultural projects within designated underserved commercial corridors. It is funded through provisions in the zoning code that allow developers to increase the density of their buildings via voluntary payments to the NOF. From its launch up until the end of 2018, the NOF had almost 100 million dollars in collected or projected funds.

The intended benefit of NOF to neighborhoods is increased access to capital to support commercial corridor investments involving grocery stores, restaurants, service providers, cultural facilities and uses that address other neighborhood needs. The idea of downtown development sourcing neighborhood development is novel. However, without an equitable and transparent process for local stakeholders to inform how NOF can develop their neighborhoods, I fear the effectiveness of the program to ensure neighborhoods benefit from the investments intended to further drive Chicago's regional economic growth is limited and unjust.

While NOF has great potential to drive investment in neighborhoods and has already amassed millions in funding, it is actually performing in a very weak and inefficient way. In its current state, the NOF is actually not inclusive of small business owners and the diversity of other neighborhood development drivers like entrepreneurs and the local workforce because it doesn't take into account the challenges each have in garnering the resources needed to impact their local neighborhood economy. These stakeholders would benefit greatly from city led and/or supported capacity building efforts to ensure access, creation of and retention of capital locally is attainable.



If existing neighborhood organizations leading community economic development efforts are informing how the NOF is structured and invested across the city, the NOF would become a catalyst for inclusive and equitable regional growth.

Through community led planning processes, these organizations would be able to provide relevant information based on priorities that were developed by a collection of stakeholders. Currently, both LISC Quality of Life Plans and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago Neighborhood Network Initiatives support a lead agency to take on the role of backbone organization at the neighborhood level within a community area. Backbone organizations bring relationships and convening power to identify interests between stakeholders and facilitate the process to understand where everyone's interest intersects. This creates an opportunity to develop community plans led by the community that can inform the city's strategies and actions to invest in individuals and neighborhoods to drive regional economic growth.

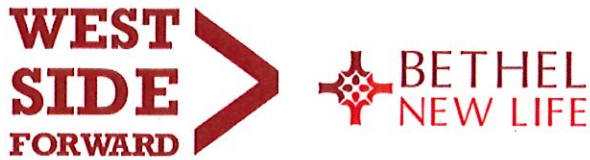
Agencies like Austin Coming Together (ACT), North Lawndale Community Council (NLCCC), and Teamwork Englewood have all recently developed community wide plans to improve the quality of life on Chicago's south and west sides. Providing these organizations and others like them with a seat at the table to represent their neighborhoods and community area when decision-making for NOF investment is needed can further leverage these efforts.

In addition to this, the City can provide funding for these plans to be created through community development intermediaries like LISC and United Way allocating them the requisite budget for community engagement expertise as appropriate to scale them up so that they cover the full city partnership with community backbone organizations.

By supporting the development and actualization of community plans the City can ensure NOF investments within neighborhoods are of the highest impact and the investors leveraging them are poised for success.

The next 100 days of the Lightfoot Administration should focus on convening developers, financial lending institutions, foundations, small businesses and neighborhood organizations to discuss what is working and not working with NOF. Once it has been established what the challenge is with NOF than all parties involved can discuss what needs to be changed to address the identified gaps and how NOF can be use to support existing plan strategies and projects. The purpose should be to identify 1-3 top priorities from the existing community plans and develop a citywide strategy to leverage NOF to support them. This will allow the City to take an active role as a liaison between neighborhood investment and regional economic growth.

In the longer term, the City can explore ways to garner additional revenue sources that can help further develop the NOF.



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[www.westsideforward.org](http://www.westsideforward.org)  
[www.bethelnewlife.org](http://www.bethelnewlife.org)

April 15, 2019

Dear Mayor Lightfoot,

I am honored to be selected to participate on your Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee. This memo is intended to offer my perspectives on your issues of concern.

Many of the economic challenges for Chicago's West and South Side communities boil down to a perceived lack of opportunity. Many residents do not believe that opportunities exist to improve their livelihoods? The City government must play a major role in the provisioning of those opportunities, and in inspiring residents to seek them.

1) What's happening today that we need to keep:

- a) **The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.** This fund does a reasonable job of generating commercial development by redistributing grant money into communities of economic need from sources that will continue to flourish. The money is put to good use, as small businesses are able to access complementary financial resources to house new businesses, or enhance existing ones.
- b) **The Chicago Development Fund.** This fund is based on a federally sponsored program that provides New Markets Tax Credits to private investors to provide low-interest commercial loans in under-invested communities. Such entities as the Method plant in the Pullman community or the Jewel Osco on Woodlawn have been beneficiaries of this fund.
- c) **A continued mindset for public investments on Chicago's West and South Sides.** Public investment in key communities will likely have a carry-over effect into private industry. Examples of this type of public investment include the planned police training facility on the West Side, and the Obama Center on the South Side. If private industry leaders recognize that these areas are able to support commercial activity (motivated workforce, safety, commuting, parking, etc.), they are likely to consider them for expansion or establishing a significant operation.

2) What we need to implement immediately; or within the next year:

- a) **The City must promote to community residents the fact that there are inexpensive and free programs throughout the area geared toward improving the economic prospects of community residents.** Training for high-demand industrial career skills, as well as entrepreneurship development, is being offered by nonprofit organizations across Chicago, as well as the City Colleges of Chicago. In a number of cases, such entities collaborate to optimize the impact of the offerings. After what amounts to three to five months of training, industry-recognized certifications are earned by program participants, which demonstrates that they are more than capable of closing any perceived skills gap for that sector. It is a bit disheartening that many residents are not aware of these offerings, or the fact such offerings are intended to benefit them. The City government carries significant credibility, and an ability to promote opportunities in a much more effective way than any other organization.



- b) **The City government must incent community industrial development investment on Chicago's West and South Sides.** Retail alone cannot be the basis for commercial sustainability in these communities. Certain industries will be the source of high demand careers, as well as a catalyst for supply chain small business opportunities. Use as an example such recent developments as those in the Pullman community, including the commutes production facility, the afore mentioned Method plant, and a number of other developments. These areas each carry attractions for certain industries that require high-demand skills, including: Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics; Cyber-security; Digital and Advanced Manufacturing; and others that will emerge over time. Such organizations as Bethel's West Side Forward operation have been offering career elevation programs in such industries, thus resulting in a continuously building skilled workforce. It is unfortunate that many of career opportunities that require these skills are situated in outlying areas versus the West and South Sides. If people see that the opportunities are realistically accessible, many more are likely to make the investment in time to obtain the door opening skills. Also, when such opportunities emerge such as the recent Amazon second headquarters, there should be strategies and discussions regarding how such entities can benefit from community facilities that would project reasonable returns on investment, as well as the offer of mainstream opportunities for local residents.
  - c) **General operating funding for community economic development activity.** Most nonprofit funding from foundations, corporations, and even government are focused on program delivery. In order to operate, West Side Forward/Bethel and similar nonprofits have expenses that are not program specific, such as administration, board management, personnel development, etc.
  - d) **Encourage engagement with typically forgotten communities as a key objective of high-profile City organizations that are focused on increasing the numbers and capabilities of STEM-based or industrial business enterprises.** As a member of the mHUB Board of Directors, I have been in the middle of establishing initiative geared toward community engagement. Other entities such as 1871 and P33 have mentioned diversity and engagement, but we are at the tip of the iceberg in terms of tangible action.
- 3) What we can plan for longer-term implementation:
- a) **Promote the pursuit of engineering and related career opportunities to community residents, accessible through City Colleges of Chicago, and its agreements with such four-year educational institutions as the University of Illinois.** Leverage such organizations as NSBE to assist in such promotional activities.
  - b) **Invest in a state-of-the-art Internet infrastructure to community residents throughout the City.** A lack of ability to fully utilize these tools is a disadvantage that minimizes the ability for individuals and businesses to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, resulting in a continued legacy of under-privilege. If anything approaching a technology based ecosystem is going to occur, residents must have access to the basic tools to foster the evolution of such an environment.

More than anything else, there must be a collective mindset of why the flourishing of these communities is important for everyone. Things like new the federally administered Opportunity Fund should not be discounted as an effective toll, if applied correctly

Community residents should not be afraid of gentrification. They should be prepared for it, by inserting themselves into the local economy. Of course, appropriate provisions should be made for affordable housing, an education system that supports these communities, cultural and entertainment venues, and the requisite health care infrastructure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ed Coleman".

Ed Coleman  
President and CEO



Eileen Mitchell  
President-Illinois

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## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Eileen Mitchell  
Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee

DATE: April 19, 2019

OBJECTIVE: Ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth

**“Together, we can and will make Chicago a place where your zip code doesn’t determine your destiny.”**

– Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot, April 2, 2019

OVERALL INITIATIVE: The City of Chicago should encourage the business community to collectively organize into a leadership group that will lead efforts to expand investment to help residents and businesses in neighborhoods on the south and west sides of Chicago.

The philanthropic community successfully organized to lead through the Partnership for Safe and Peaceful Communities. Our suggestion is that the Lightfoot Administration convene the business community to encourage a similar path to progress.

Expanded investment includes hiring, supply chain and supplier diversity opportunities, business education and mentorship programs, as well as internships for residents of the south and west sides.

The AT&T Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> initiative is one model of how a corporation can utilize a broad array of assets to provide support for residents and businesses in underserved neighborhoods. Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> is an AT&T employee initiative designed to improve lives and lift 19 Chicago neighborhoods most affected by gun violence and high unemployment. Through Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup>, AT&T is working to help residents of these neighborhoods find the opportunity they deserve to succeed in education, careers, and life.



As additional corporations expand their support into the neighborhoods, the Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> model can become a force multiplier. The residents and businesses of these neighborhoods will benefit from multiple companies focusing diverse assets to help improve lives and opportunities – from hiring to supplier spending to philanthropy and volunteerism.

The early Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> results are encouraging.

AT&T is working on dozens of Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> initiatives to support the 19 neighborhoods, but the most quantifiable results since early 2018 are as follows:

- Hired 500 new AT&T employees from the 19 neighborhoods
- Opened a new AT&T retail store in the Englewood neighborhood
- Developed the online job skills learning platform, called “AT&T Learn,” available at BelieveChicago.com.
- Contributed \$4 million to more than 100 organizations working in the 19 neighborhoods to help residents with workforce training, support for workforce re-entry, mental health, after school programs, anti-violence training and more.
- Volunteered at more than 60 events with more than 800 AT&T volunteers to support efforts in the neighborhoods.
- Worked to change the narrative about Chicago by telling the good news of people helping others through advertising and the “Beacons of Hope: Stories of Strength from Chicago” documentary by AUDIENCE Network.

To support the work of the Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Committee, the Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> model could support key goals identified in Mayor-Elect Lightfoot’s, “A Plan to Invest in Our Neighborhoods and Small Businesses.”

### **Localize Supply Chains through Community Partnerships**

The AT&T Prime Supplier Program connects dedicated AT&T supplier diversity managers with our Prime Suppliers to help proliferate diverse businesses into our supply chain. They work together to set meaningful goals for utilization of diverse suppliers as subcontractors, and to encourage development of innovative solutions for improving and tracking diversity results. AT&T is working in the neighborhoods to identify potential supply chain opportunities for diverse suppliers through our Prime Supplier Program.

- Lightfoot Administration Opportunity: The City of Chicago should convene meetings where large companies in Chicago can identify potential supply chain vendors, subcontractors and other opportunities.

## **Expand Opportunities for Minority, Disabled, Veteran, and Women-owned Businesses, Small Businesses and Returning Citizens**

DIVERSE SUPPLIERS: AT&T recently expanded our diversity supplier program with a commitment to increase our spend with black suppliers to \$3 billion across the U.S. by 2020. The commitment is inspired by community-driven initiatives, such as Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup>, to help push economic growth and innovation. AT&T is planning to hold a supplier diversity event to support businesses in the neighborhoods with the goal of increasing our spend with local diverse suppliers from the 19 neighborhoods.

- Lightfoot Administration Opportunity: The City of Chicago should encourage supplier diversity opportunities by hosting matchmaker events for vendors in south and west side Chicago neighborhoods. In addition, the City should host its own supplier diversity event for businesses in the neighborhoods.

HIRING: AT&T is working to hire qualified residents of the 19 neighborhoods. Since 2018, AT&T hired more than 500 residents of these neighborhoods into good-paying, organized labor jobs at AT&T. We continue to hold hiring events in the neighborhoods and we are working with organizations that help residents of the neighborhoods find gainful employment. The next AT&T hiring event in the neighborhoods is scheduled for Summer 2019.

- Lightfoot Administration Opportunity: The City of Chicago should encourage companies to hold hiring events in the south and west side neighborhoods, and to work with organizations helping residents find jobs. In addition, the City should host a hiring fair for residents of the neighborhoods on the south and west sides.

## **Offer Small Businesses Planning Advice and Technical Support**

AT&T established an education and mentoring program in 2011 to help diverse businesses. The program uses three pillars for success: education, mentoring and presentation. Since its inception, 87 diverse students have graduated from the program.

- Lightfoot Administration Opportunity: The City of Chicago should identify diverse small businesses from the Believe Chicago<sup>SM</sup> neighborhoods to consider for education and mentorship support opportunities.

## **Grow Professional Programs**

AT&T supports internship programs to further opportunities for young people from south and west side neighborhoods. Our company currently achieves this through Year Up Chicago, Christ the King Corporate Work Study Program, and One Summer Chicago.

- Lightfoot Administration Opportunity: The City of Chicago should convene Chicago companies to events and discussions providing visibility to internship programs that provide empowering opportunity to students from the south and west side neighborhoods.

In “A Plan to Invest in Our Neighborhoods and Small Businesses,” you outlined a commitment to “bring meaningful, sustained investments to long-neglected neighborhoods and populations.” We stand ready to work with the Lightfoot Administration and other businesses in Chicago to help achieve that goal.

Thank you for the invitation to offer this submission.



**Name:** Rev. Ira Acree

**Transition Team:** Business, Economics, & Neighborhood Development

**Prompt:**

According to a recent Rush University study, West Garfield Park has the lowest life expectancy in the city of Chicago. Due to decades of neglect, high unemployment, failing schools and persistent gun violence, the community tragically ranks first in “potential life loss,” a metric for premature death. In 2017, New Mount Pilgrim church, the largest congregation and community stakeholder in West Garfield, partnered with Chicago CRED to create the MAAFA Redemption Project—a faith-based residential institute for high-risk young men ages 18-30. The Project invests in these young men with employment, housing, industrial training in the construction trades, mental healthcare and other wrap-around social services. Even more, the Project participants work as apprentices under experienced local general contractors to rehab abandoned homes on the Westside.

Apart from being recognized by NBC’s Leftfield, The Today Show, and Chicago Magazine, the MAAFA Redemption Project will be featured in a 2020 documentary film highlighting the plight of West Garfield and the promise of New Mount Pilgrim’s neighborhood redevelopment plan.

**This memo advocates for the scaling of the aforementioned Project to accommodate more high risk young men in East Garfield Park and the Austin neighborhood.** Currently, New Mount Pilgrim serves twenty young men in West Garfield. Scaling the MAAFA Redemption Project would entail New Mount Pilgrim partnering with New Landmark church in East

Garfield, and Greater St. John in Austin—adding at least forty young men (twenty for each site per annual program cycle).

As well-respected African American churches on the Westside, these three faith organizations have already begun pooling public and private dollars and support for this effort. Arne Duncan of Chicago CRED, and Laurene Powell Jobs of the Emerson Collective are current partners, and we are asking Mayor-elect Lightfoot to lend her support as well. We ask that Mayor Lightfoot convene other public and private networks and resources to aid our proposal. Other partners include Rush University Medical center and West Side United, the Cook County Land bank, and Chicago Bulls Charities. Ultimately, our goal is to demonstrate what could happen when the faith-based community comes together to advance a comprehensive business and neighborhood development plan. As many are aware, historically African American churches have always been multi-purposed institutions; meeting the social, political, economic and spiritual needs of its parishioners. This memo, and the plan it entails, seeks to do just that. With the support of Mayor Lightfoot's administration, the Westside of Chicago will undergo organic economic redevelopment while ensuring the public safety of all Chicagoans.

Peace and Blessings,

Rev. Ira J. Acree  
Senior Pastor Greater St. John Bible Church  
1256 N Waller Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60651

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Jack J. Crowe, Executive Director, Year Up Chicago

**DATE:** April 15, 2019

**RE:** Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Memo

## **Introduction**

There is a talent crisis in Chicago. Across the city, 50,000 young adults 18 to 24 years old - who are out of school and out of livable wage work - are unable to find a path to self-sufficiency or a family-sustaining wage. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of jobs will go unfilled over the next decade because employers cannot find the skilled talent they need for the 21st century economy. This paradox is the result of a market failure: our city's education and training systems are out of touch with employers' needs and out of reach for young adults. Correcting this failure is a moral imperative and economic necessity.

Meanwhile, Chicago has one strong and growing asset: the dramatically increasing number of new tech jobs, whether in programming, cybersecurity, med-tech, fin-tech, or data analytics. Google, Facebook and Salesforce have all announced that they are adding 1000 new tech jobs each in Chicago, and companies in every industry have trouble filling tech roles. Now, imagine that we train at scale young adults from our neighborhoods to meet that growing demand, provide the transitional social services supports and mentoring they need, place them in professional internships and jobs. In the process, we will make Chicago the diversity-tech capital of the United States, all while injecting hundreds of millions of dollars of earned income from these young adults into Chicago's most challenged neighborhoods.

Investing in Opportunity Youth is critical to Chicago's economic success and for ensuring Chicago meets future workforce demands. With government initiatives and private sector innovation, Mayor Lightfoot's administration can change the laws, policies, and economic drivers that prop up our city's education and workforce systems.

## **Initiative**

With Mayor Lightfoot's leadership, Chicago has an opportunity to change the perceptions, practices, and policies that perpetuate inequality of opportunity. We must engage citizens, businesses, academic institutions, non-profits, and city and state government to transform pathways to post-secondary schooling and careers. Success will be marked by changing the way talent is viewed, changing outdated hiring and training practices, and advancing policies that create on-ramps for Opportunity Youth to enter the labor market with skills that have currency.

The best approach is through a new Diversity Tech Initiative in Chicago. By working with the Lightfoot administration, tech companies that have made hiring commitments to the city would be connected at scale to proven and effective training providers that help train a diverse talent pipeline for entry-level middle skill jobs. Doing this will not be easy and will require change work at the City Colleges of Chicago, other local colleges and universities, workforce organizations, for profit boot camps and placement firms, and supporting social service agencies.

## **Lightfoot Administration Values**

Chicago's Diversity Tech Initiative will seek to address those values by ensuring that this work is equitable, transparent, accountable, inclusive, diverse, and transformative, consistent with the Lightfoot administration's core values.

Equitable. A Diversity Tech Initiative will be tailored to meet citizens where they are by creating a support infrastructure for Opportunity Youth as they rise to entry-level tech jobs.

Transparent. A Diversity Tech Initiative will operate openly to ensure that the public understands how resources are being used to improve our city's economy.

Accountable. A Diversity Tech Initiative will be overseen by a newly-formed Commission on Talent and Opportunity made up of corporate leaders and workforce organizations to ensure that work is done with accountability and to strengthen the public trust in the initiative.

Diverse and Inclusive. A Diversity Tech Initiative will seek to engage populations of color that are often excluded from the economic mainstream and mobilize talent in tech to mentor new workers through a scalable Chicagoland-wide mentoring platform.

Transformative. A Diversity Tech Initiative has the potential to transform how Chicago's young citizens, particularly those without a bachelor's degree, acquire relevant skills and how employers approach talent recruitment and hiring.

## **Advancing the Initiative**

In order for a Chicago Diversity Tech Initiative to be successful, it should adhere to a set of policy principles that align systems with employer demand, facilitate cross-sector collaboration, focus on outcomes and results, and secure opportunity for all youth. These principles can be measured by determining what changes should happen in the first 100 days of your administration, and what should be planned for longer-term implementation.

Align Systems to Employer Demand. Chicago must work to ensure that the city's education and workforce systems are aligned with employer demand. Seamless alignment with skills demanded in the labor market will ensure that the city's education and workforce systems are preparing Opportunity Youth for gainful employment. To more effectively align systems, consider:

**First 100 Days:** Advancing a tuition-free community college initiative.

**Longer-Term:** Integrating more innovative and effective professional skills platforms into the city's colleges to provide the 80,000 young adults it enrolls with the professional skills employers need. For example, all Year Up interns, regardless of job title, work with data analytics, and yet training in tools such as Excel is not ubiquitous in high school or college.

**Address Challenges:** Limited connection between training programs and employer demand.

Facilitate Cross-Sector Collaboration. Traditional siloed approaches to workforce development limit the ability of Opportunity Youth to have successful labor market and life outcomes. When actors in the public, private, and non-profit spaces work together and collaborate, Opportunity Youth are more likely to attain a W2 that grows over time. To ensure this alignment, consider:

**First 100 Days:** Creating a citywide task force responsible for understanding Chicago's talent marketplace and providing recommendations to the Mayor on how to more effectively connect employers with Opportunity Youth.

**Longer-Term:** Launching a citywide campaign aimed at shifting employer perceptions of Opportunity Youth and changing hiring practices. We will leverage online training and

assessment tools used by industry. We will work with City Colleges to create market-relevant cyber, data analytics and programming academies including professional skill training and internships.

**Address Challenges:** Diverse young adults are not seen as a source of talent by Chicago's employers.

Focus on Outcomes and Results. We do not often view compliance as a measure of success in our education and workforce systems. Workforce development systems must share responsibility for labor market outcomes by adopting goals and adapting the use of public resources to improve outcomes that matter for Opportunity Youth. To facilitate, consider:

**First 100 Days:** Improving procurement processes to ensure that training providers are only awarded public funding for producing positive labor market outcomes for Opportunity Youth.

**Longer-Term:** Providing new talent acquisition incentives and technical assistance for employers to rethink how to source and recruit diverse talent.

**Address Challenges:** Education and workforce systems are compliance-driven.

Secure Opportunity for All Youth. Our city is richly diverse, and all communities need access to meaningful employment opportunities. We must remove barriers to employment to ensure that employers are not missing out on talented applicants and that we are not marginalizing young adults who are assets to our workforce and communities. To achieve this, consider:

**First 100 Days:** Removing as many barriers to employment for system-involved youth as possible, including expediting criminal expungement proceedings administratively and limiting the use of credit checks as employee screens.

**Longer-Term:** Creating an eco-system of social support organizations focused on serving rising Opportunity Youth who are accessing new jobs; creating a Cabinet-level position tasked with expanding economic opportunities, including internships, for Opportunity Youth across the city.

**Address Challenges:** Too many labor market barriers lead to skill stagnation.

## **Conclusion**

The City of Chicago has an opportunity to work with some of our country's leading companies and catapult more Opportunity Youth from minimum wage jobs into meaningful careers. A Diversity Tech Initiative that convenes tech companies to advance a set of diverse training and hiring practices would provide economic dignity to Opportunity Youth, correct the mismatches that exist in the youth labor market, and remake the broken talent marketplace in our city.



**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
**FROM:** Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

The Chicagoland Chamber represents the depth and breadth of the business community in Chicago. From Fortune 100 to small businesses and entrepreneurs, the Chamber provides invaluable resources and services to our members to ensure they continue to grow and thrive. Our members, big and small, make substantial contributions to the City and its residents to ensure Chicago remains a vibrant place to live and work.

***This document is non-comprehensive.***

#### **Small Business Support Initiatives:**

- **Supplier Diversity (MBE/WBE/BEPD<sup>1</sup>):** create a task force to focus on expanding *certification of* and contracting opportunities for MBE/WBE/BEPD's. Conduct pro-active outreach to potential qualifying businesses and then guide them through the qualification and application process.
- **Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF):**
  - review how to responsibly provide the grants upfront to the small business, or at least a larger percentage of the funds. Often, the small business may not have the capital to front the money required by the current reimbursement model being used;
  - utilize funds for helping small businesses leverage access to capital with CDFI's and banks;
  - support local infrastructure for transit and broadband to connect neighborhoods virtually and physically;
  - Support attraction of neighborhood anchors like healthcare institutions, non-profits, and small businesses.
- **Permits/Licenses:** create a task force to thoughtfully review and recommend specific permits/licenses that could be streamlined for more efficient application that does not involve passing an ordinance, and ultimately an auto-renewal process involving a "one-page" application provided to all appropriate departments for review, while balancing the need for some aldermanic review.

#### **Talent Initiatives:**

There is significant interest from middle market companies to engage the apprenticeship model, but a lack of resources to manage their own program led the Chamber to launch a Middle Market Apprenticeship Program to meet this need and encourage the hiring of such apprentices. Recommendations include:

- Continue to invest in expanding work-based learning opportunities for City Colleges students<sup>2</sup>, both for internships and apprenticeships. Revamp and modernize curriculum and awarding of course credit, prioritize alignment with industry needs in key sectors (healthcare, IT/engineering/tech, financial/professional services, and hospitality);
- Find resources for more incumbent worker training and on-the-job training. Evaluate, prioritize and find opportunities through federal job training resources;

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<sup>1</sup> Business Enterprise own by People with Disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> Support the Star Scholarship program.

- We recommend leveraging skills matching tools and technology, like the Chicago Opportunity Exchange, to increase access to job opportunities for students and job seekers in the Chicago area through building better connections and reducing hiring bias, especially for women, people of color, and people with disabilities<sup>3</sup>.

### **Neighborhood Revitalization:**

Challenge companies to support neighborhoods and provide resources both in funding and volunteering, through work with local community organizations to revitalize neighborhoods and schools. Some companies are likely already doing this type of work, so it would be valuable to “audit” where investments are being made and where community gaps may be. For example, programs like AT&T’s Believe Chicago and Comcast’s to Careers Program are the types of investment companies should be making in Chicago and its neighborhoods.

### **Mass Transit & Mobility:**

Continue to leverage transit TIFs to leverage any potential federal dollars and build new mass transit infrastructure to support communities especially on the South and West sides, ultimately working toward transit-oriented development and support and growth of local businesses.

Fight for a capital bill in Springfield that prioritizes sustainable mass transit funding and calls for 30% of all new transportation funding to be for mass transit infrastructure. This will help revitalize and connect our neighborhoods and attract new anchor institutions to our communities. Mobility means opportunity.

### **Tourism:**

Do a review of the tourism funding – both city and state- to increase marketing the cultural assets and increase neighborhood visits. Meet with the State Tourism Office to get a tutorial on how the tax works and explore other grant programs the City can leverage to extend their funding (grants are back). There is information on each neighborhood and at one time the city provided weekend tours to those assets – review of DCASEs research would unearth valuable information.

**Conclusion:** The Chicagoland Chamber looks forward to working with the Mayor-Elect on supporting her efforts and continuing to build on our own efforts to expand economic growth and opportunity beyond the commercial business district and into the neighborhoods, as it has for years through its SBDC and Small Business Chicago initiative. In addition, the importance of equity, inclusion, and transparency for every Chicagoan in every neighborhoods are values the Chamber has shared as an organization through our own member supported diversity and inclusion initiatives, as well as providing greater economic opportunity through our incumbent worker training efforts. We look forward to supporting your efforts and working in a substantive and thoughtful way to support a Chicago that works for everyone.

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<sup>3</sup> Support and review the Mayoral Task Force on Employment & Economic Opportunity for People with Disabilities report filed in February of 2019.

**DATE:** April 15, 2019

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Julian Posada, COO of TRP and President of LiftUp Enterprises

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to create the Office of Neighborhood Development (OND)

I am honored to be part of the Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Transition Committee. I applaud the new Administration's commitment to the Core Values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion as a means to ensure that all neighborhoods benefit from economic growth. Rather than offering an initiative that supports one of the Administration's economic growth objectives; in this memo I offer instead an initiative to promote the infusion of the Core Values into all of the Administration's activities.

### **Proposed Initiative**

I propose that the Administration take the bold step of creating a new Office of Neighborhood Development (OND) to serve as a centralized source of information, guidance and support for small business and neighborhood development activities.

The Administration's commitment to Core Values will be difficult to translate into real progress in the absence of structural change in City government. Many residents do not believe that City government acts in their favor. They view large-scale projects and programs as primarily benefitting big business and the wealthy rather than the city at large. The City currently lacks a process by which such projects and programs can be properly vetted in a timely manner for their adherence to the Core Values. A core function of the OND would be to ensure that the Core Values are infused into all such activities in a disciplined and coherent way.

The OND would serve developers, change agents, community-based organizations and small businesses which need City Hall to move their ideas into reality. Its purpose would be to provide the guidance, counsel and oversight needed to move projects and initiatives forward in a fair and equitable manner. It would need to be linked to the highest level of local government, such as reporting to a Deputy Mayor, and utilize both incentives and disincentives in order to move forward meaningful initiatives.

A primary role of the OND would be to bring together, in each neighborhood, a diverse group of organizations and residents to identify priorities such as better education, housing, job choices, safer streets and new economic opportunities. Existing models such as LISC Chicago's Quality-of-Life Planning can be leveraged, as well as the work of CCA. Proposed projects and initiatives can then be evaluated by the OND on the basis of their alignment with the identified priorities of one or more neighborhoods.

The OND would also establish and manage a digital platform featuring in one location all initiatives and opportunities which are available to small businesses and neighborhood organizations. The platform would serve as a clearinghouse for opportunities and a training resource.

OND sign-off would also be required for certain large-scale projects (to be defined by reference to economic support sought, zoning requirements and/or other measures to be determined). OND's role would be to evaluate such projects for adherence to the Core Values. In connection with its evaluation, OND would apply a framework/assessment tool that is transparent and promotes understanding of the benefits of Core Values.

The OND staff would employ project management processes in order to drive projects and initiatives to completion in a way that is efficient, addresses neighborhood priorities, and promotes transparency and the other Core Values. Staff would be assisted by volunteers from the business and philanthropic

community.

Many other cities are ahead of Chicago in placing racial and other equity frameworks into city government. They can be used as reference models when developing the OND's mission, structure and activities. Ultimately the OND could take the lead in developing policy recommendations to present to the Mayor and City Hall.

### **The Next 100 Days and Longer-Term**

In the next 100 days the Administration should develop and prove out the OND structure by championing a few projects which have the potential of benefiting from a racial equity assessment tool. Focusing on a few projects provides an opportunity to learn and to socialize the concept of using structure and process to infuse Core Values into all of the City's investments, wherever they are located. The goal in the first 100 days would be to develop processes for the OND to provide the necessary project support and to ensure alignment of the projects with neighborhood priorities and the Core Values. After proving out the concept with a few small wins, the OND model could be more fully fleshed out and implemented over the long-term.

### **Challenges**

There are a number of challenges which might stand in the way of the establishment and/or success of the OND. Some may view the OND as just one more layer of bureaucracy. To combat this criticism the Administration should stand firm on the need for a bold, and stable structural change in order to promote Core Values, while at the same time staffing the OND leanly and leveraging volunteer resources from the business and philanthropic community to the greatest extent possible.

Some within and outside the Administration may ignore or fail to respect the mission of the OND. By requiring the OND's sign-off for certain large-scale projects (to be defined), the Administration will ensure that the OND is in a position to fulfill its mandate.

I believe that a structural change of this nature could dramatically further the City's progress with issues of diversity, inclusion and equity and lead to greater accountability and transparency. The OND can play a significant role in building City-wide financial strength, uniting neighborhoods, and restoring confidence in City government.

April 15, 2019

**Name:** Joel Simon, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

**Transition Committee:** Business, Economic and Neighborhood Development

**Objective:** Ensure that all individuals have opportunities to participate in the region's economic vitality

**Potential Initiative:**

Utilize the economic development process to prioritize and incentivize hiring from low income and minority communities; directing resources to support community engagement, workforce recruitment, skills development, and support for local hiring.

- **What's happening today that we need to keep**

A number of firms in Chicago have made a deep commitment to addressing diversity priorities and attracting and developing local talent. Several large companies are sourcing talent via education and community organizations that access diverse participants and serve participants from Chicago's diverse neighborhoods. Employers within key industry sectors have also organized in order to create shared mechanisms for more consistent and inclusive messaging to communities, and more coherent practices among the employers.

Chicago has a network of organizations who can recruit individuals for job opportunities and who can provide or enable the services needed – job readiness, job training, etc. Those organizations often lack access to the hiring agents and lack information about anticipated skills needs and the realities of employment in those sectors and at those firms. Too often, they are called upon to deliver candidates in too short a time, so all are disappointed when the applicants are not ready and are not as competitive for those opportunities that the development creates.

- **Values.** Such an initiative will:

Increase the flow of diverse candidates into emerging opportunities and better position them for employment and career paths.

Hold the development process accountable to the broader community by including a wider range of people in development and its benefits.

Transform how marginalized communities are positioned to engage in economic activity.

- **To Advance this initiative in the next 100 days,** the new administration can:

Inventory impending development activity and assess/determine expected hiring activity. Identify a small number (2-3) of development projects and aligned community and workforce development organizations with which to pilot such an initiative.

Create language to include in development agreements that (1) memorializes the objective of maximizing local hiring, (2) requires information exchange and collaboration between developers, employers, and community/workforce development agencies that enables (3) creation of a sourcing, preparation and hiring plan as a part of the broader development plan.

Amplify the work of the Chicago Regional Apprenticeship Network and actively engage new business partners – with an emphasis on small and medium sized firms and convene a task force to design an apprenticeship initiative for smaller firms, while providing intermediary supports for human resource functions that smaller firms may not have the capacity to provide themselves.

Map training and engagement resources available (CBOs, City Colleges, others) that can be activated to support key sectors (IT, manufacturing, business services, hospitality, etc) and associated development activity.

Align with the work of the Education Committee, to ensure that education institutions (particularly career and technical high school programs and appropriate City College of Chicago programs) are part of the recruitment and training apparatus.

- **Longer term**, the administration can:

Enhance the engagement and training network so we can respond to employer needs more quickly and in a way that increases program quality and confidence among employers.

Build infrastructure for the Chicago Apprenticeship Network, including third-party intermediary assistance to small and medium-sized businesses who do not have HR infrastructure that can adequately support their own apprenticeship program.

Continue to utilize business networks to encourage leaders to adopt local hiring initiatives and utilize partners that can best access and engage individuals in Chicago's low income and minority neighborhoods.

Apply this concept to specific development types such as Opportunity Zones, TIFs.

Continue to invest in and amplify Anchor Institutions' local hiring efforts.

Continue to refine policy to properly balance incentives and requirements.

Align as appropriate with other transition committees, including Education (to align to technical/industry programming at CPS and CCC), Arts and Culture (to tap into the economic/jobs generation of the Arts and Culture community).

## **Key Challenges**

- Employers and developers may resist anything that appears to be a new regulation.
- Local residents may not have the requisite skills or credentials needed to be competitive for the jobs. Development schedules and budgets may not allow proper time or resources needed to fill skills gaps.
- The City does not directly control the training agencies. Coordination among multiple interests and natural competition between recruitment and training entities will need to be managed.
- Some of the information necessary to design successful initiatives may not be available in a timeframe that allows for strong programming.
- Development projects' timeframes and overall plans can and do change. Managing community expectations and sourcing/training initiatives amidst these kinds of changes will be a challenge.

**TO:** Business, Economic and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee  
**FROM:** Lyneir Richardson  
**DATE:** April 15, 2019  
**RE:** **Next Economy Neighborhood Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Commission**

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I am honored to join the BEND Transition Committee and look forward to working with its members to inform the Mayor-elect's strategy for inclusive economic growth.

The Mayor-elect has rightly recognized the importance of creating an agenda to ensure that all Chicago neighborhoods and residents, particularly those that have been historically overlooked and undervalued, participate in and benefit from the city's economic growth. This memo outlines several elements that I believe should be included as part of an integrated approach to driving inclusive economic growth, and it recommends the formation of a commission that will focus on **Next Economy Neighborhood Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (NEED)**.

#### **What is happening today that we need to keep?**

On a macro-level, existing cluster-based strategies that align the city's economic growth initiatives, programs, policies and incentives should be continued. There have been a wide range of city activities - from small business development procurement and certification services, entrepreneurial capacity building, financial support and workforce development assistance to planning, zoning, permitting and licensing improvements - that have resulted in visible and measurable economic development. It is my hope that the Mayor-elect will be a champion of these activities which, when strategically aligned and mutually-reinforcing, will generate much greater impact than a fragmented array of siloed activities or one-off program announcements.

On a micro-level, the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund program should be kept (and improved) because it has demonstrated the potential to be a potent "cluster based" inclusive economic growth tool. With some revision to the existing rules, this program could be substantially improved and leveraged to strengthen existing neighborhood-based small businesses, catalyze new development projects and create more jobs - particularly benefiting African American and Latino residents of the city.

#### **What needs to be implemented immediately?**

I am recommending the formation of the Next Economy Neighborhood Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (NEED) Commission. Its mission would be to create business attraction and retention initiatives, growth strategies and incentive programs, specifically to assist African American and Latino entrepreneurs and neighborhoods that have higher unemployment, poverty rates and crime levels. The NEED Commission could be charged to (a) study and launch cutting-edge inclusive

growth projects to enable African American and Latino entrepreneurs to lead and drive neighborhood commercial development projects (rather than just participate in them), (b) refine existing and create new cluster-based strategy tools (i.e. fix the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, get philanthropy to support the hiring of a Chicago Opportunity Zone Chief, etc.), (c) advocate for the strategic relocation of more corporate and government office jobs to commercial corridors in targeted neighborhoods, (d) create neighborhood hubs for tech and tech-enabled start-ups, and (e) support efforts to get needed retail services and amenities to neighborhoods. In my work as CEO of Chicago TREND, Assistant Professor at Rutgers Business School, and board member of the International Economic Development Council and the New Growth Innovation Network, I have participated in crafting various versions of the following ideas that could be more fully explored by the NEED Commission:

Expanding Inclusive Ownership of High-Growth Companies. Most minority business development programs focus on helping new entrepreneurs and small start-ups, and often place people of color in low-growth businesses or legacy industries. The NEED Commission could aim to help high-capacity business professionals of color to own, lead and scale up high-growth companies. The success of more fast-growing, African American and Latino-led companies will generate greater business and employment opportunities for other people of color and neighborhoods, as well as increase innovation and success in the Chicago economy overall. Components of the work could include: (a) procurement commitments from public and private sources for large dollar contracting with African American and Latino-owned professional service firms, (b) sophisticated targeting of potential high-growth firms in growth industries for acquisition by African American or Latino entrepreneurs, and (c) engagement of experienced African American and Latino business owners (i.e. the Business Leadership Council member firms) to mentor and invest in smaller neighborhood entrepreneurs of color (directly tying NEED Commission support of African American and Latino contracting success and new business opportunity to community development responsibility).

Inclusive Land Development. A combination of emerging market dynamics, residential preferences and the federal Opportunity Zone law is making vacant and underutilized urban commercial and industrial land increasingly attractive for development. The NEED Commission could seek to create strategies to foster investment in projects that will generate wealth for disconnected African American and Latino residents and firms in the neighborhoods surrounding these “newly” valuable sites. The NEED Commission could: (a) identify, assess and prioritize vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial land assets in targeted neighborhoods, (b) establish business development, workforce development and other programming to build capacity in African American and Latino workers, entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations, and (c) develop financial tools that facilitate African American and Latino leadership ownership of real estate in appreciating areas.

Inclusive Neighborhood Economic Development. Neighborhoods succeed or fail in the context of how their people, firms, real estate and other assets connect to regional markets. The NEED Commission could oversee neighborhood growth planning that is (a) future-focused, rigorous and market-based, and (b) grounded in the surrounding regional economic context. The NEED Commission could help to create more neighborhoods of opportunity (connecting their assets to larger markets, driving regional growth) as well as neighborhoods of choice (developing packages of amenities attractive to different segments of the regional population).

I look forward to the next BEND Transition Committee meeting.





## MEMORANDUM

TO: Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Leon I. Walker, Esq., Managing Partner, DL3 Realty L.P.

DATE: April 15, 2019

RE: City of Chicago Opportunity Zone Challenge

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### **Firm Background**

DL3 Realty is a commercial real estate development company that approaches projects through the lens of Venture Development – a modern, sustainable economic development strategy that creates positive, holistic change in urban neighborhoods while earning competitive risk-adjusted financial returns. We invest in real estate projects that help improve and sustain neighborhood life in Chicago's urban communities, and we continually seek to engage like-minded partners who recognize that investing in urban neighborhoods can be financially rewarding in the long run, while providing attractive social impact returns in the short run. Our projects are more than just bricks and mortar. We pursue impact investments that provide an economic stimulus and improve quality of life for local residents.

### **Chicago Opportunity Zone Challenge**

**This memo introduces the concept of a City of Chicago Opportunity Zone Challenge—a new initiative from Mayor Elect Lori Lightfoot that encourages private equity investors to participate in projects that will revitalize the south and west sides of Chicago.**

### **Opportunity Zone Legislation**

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 introduced a new incentive—centered around the deferral, reduction and elimination of capital gains taxes—to spur long-term private equity investments in predominately low-income and underserved areas designated as “Opportunity Zones.” The legislation allows investors with capital gains tax liabilities to receive favorable tax treatment for making long-term investments in Opportunity Zones. The Opportunity Zone program has the potential to attract billions of dollars in unrealized capital gains, and could serve as one of the largest economic development initiatives in U.S. history. Of the approximately 8,700 census tracts designated as Opportunity Zones in the U.S., 135 are located in Chicago, which is a majority of Cook County's 181 designated Opportunity Zones. According to the Urban Institute's *How Chicago and Cook County Can Leverage Opportunity Zones for Community Benefit*, only a small subset of Cook County's designated tracts have fueled skepticism and concerns over gentrification and displacement risk, while more than 95 percent of the designated zones do not show signs of gentrification (Meixell & Theodos, 2019).

### **Initiative**

Federal legislation was intentional in encouraging investment within the next three years, which will coincide nicely with Mayor Elect Lightfoot's first term—provided there is an urgent call to action matched by a comprehensive set of local incentives designed to supercharge the potential returns for pursuing projects in communities starved for investment. The vast majority of Chicago's Opportunity Zones are located in historically disadvantaged neighborhoods that are in need of transformative investments. By focusing a full range of services and resources on projects in Chicago's Opportunity Zones, we can lift communities out of economic stagnation and put them on track to become an emerging, expanding and eventually mature community. However, it is also important to ensure these efforts result in revitalization and not gentrification, which to be successful, requires engagement of existing residents and legacy businesses in revitalization efforts. While investors and communities are still navigating what the new Opportunity Zone program means for them, now is the time for local government to engage their incentive and risk mitigation toolkits to further encourage investment in our city's underserved communities.

### **Existing City of Chicago Initiatives**

1. Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) is a promising grant program designed to promote investment and business creation on the south and west sides of Chicago.
2. Retail Thrive Zones provide economic development incentives for small businesses/entrepreneurs.
3. Adopt-a-Landmark provides funding for the restoration of Chicago's Landmarks.
4. Tax Increment Financing (TIF), while often derided when used to support projects in affluent neighborhoods, is an important policy tool for stimulating growth in areas lacking investment.
5. Property tax incentives such as Classes 6 & 7 encourage investments in underserved communities.

### **Short-Term Implementation Plan (100 days)**

1. Establish a new grant competition where finalist receive cash awards for third-party pre-development support (e.g., Phase I work, architectural design, market studies, and appraisals) up to \$250,000 per Opportunity Zone project, similar to the Industrial Growth Zones initiative.
2. Streamline building permit process and eliminate permit fees for Opportunity Zone projects, similar to Green Permit Program.
3. Direct majority of NOF awards (e.g., 80%) to support businesses/projects located in Opportunity Zones.
4. Offset on-site mandates in the Affordable Requirements Ordinance by encouraging developers to build quality, affordable workforce housing (e.g., 80% to 120% of AMI) in Opportunity Zones.
5. Prioritize Chicago Development Fund new market tax credit allocations to Opportunity Zone investments.
6. Coordinate philanthropic grants to cover costs of compliance with sustainability initiatives and provide free technical support, similar to Net Zero program. If necessary, exempt high-impact Opportunity Zone projects from compliance with the sustainability matrix.

### **Long-Term Implementation Plan**

1. Create an Opportunity Zone and Neighborhood Revitalization Council made up of local leaders and headed by a new Commissioner of Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development. The main focus of this Council will be to:
  - a. Provide guidance and rule-making authority over Opportunity Zone programs;
  - b. Assist Opportunity Zone businesses in accessing resources and financial incentives; and
  - c. Establish metrics and annual reporting to track Opportunity Zone activity.
2. Modify TIF program to re-allocate and "port" TIF funds to Chicago's Opportunity Zones.
3. Organize philanthropy to support a "first-loss" pool of capital that can provide credit enhancement on leases, and/or a project reserve to improve lender underwriting of Opportunity Zone projects.
4. Assemble tracts of City owned land parcels in Opportunity Zones into bid packages, such that master land developers can propose large scale developments designed to create new communities of choice and revitalize historic neighborhoods.
5. Create a new real estate tax incentive class for Opportunity Zone investments, similar to Class 7 and Class 6 incentives.
6. Create a City of Chicago supported online marketplace to connect investors with Opportunity Zone projects in Chicago, and widely publicize successful matches/projects.

### **Potential Challenges**

1. Resistance to new Commissioner of Business, Neighborhood and Economic Development.
2. Lack of funding available to support and sustain incentives needed to attract investors.
3. Public perception that private investment only leads to gentrification instead of engaged revitalization.

### **Conclusion**

We believe that success builds on success. As economic development activity picks up in Chicago's Opportunity Zones, private equity investors will take notice and begin directing resources into historically disinvested neighborhoods. We look to the new administration to prioritize both existing and new economic incentives in Chicago's Opportunity Zones in order to create a ripple effect throughout the surrounding neighborhoods. The positive development of these areas is necessary to grow the tax base, and meaningfully address our long-term structural financial deficit.

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Markell Bridges  
Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee

Prompt: Ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth –

***Build a sustainable progression model of economic growth and stability for distressed and disadvantaged neighborhoods; providing equitable investments that address immediate needs of today while strategically building for longer-term stabilized communities.***

Equitable investment does not mean equal investment. Distressed or disadvantaged communities require heightened and focused investment and attention to reach parity across neighborhoods – including schools, labor infrastructure and opportunities, and safety.

Our city's issues related to distressed and disadvantaged neighborhoods are multi-prong and have been decades in the making. The solution needs to be a balanced mix of some immediate investments, short-term actions, and long-term strategies with a focus on growth and sustainability.

It also will be beneficial to have reliable metrics and clearly defined measures that assess success. These metrics and measures will serve as a scorecard to show our progression and impact, while holding stakeholders accountable. The immediate actions could define and implement pilots that enable course corrections along the way; taken successes and best practices to immediately replicate, expand and adapt to broader areas for capturing greater more significant wins and impacts.

Here are recommended ways we can address key components of the solution and their explanation:

- Drive new business development and neighborhood revitalization
- Develop break-through job training and education programs
- Significantly increase focus on Technology, Innovation, and Data Analytics
- Invest in programs that drive violence reduction and elimination of gun violence
- Grow neighborhood economics without displacing its current residents

**Drive new business development and neighborhood revitalization:** Continue investing and enhance programs that enable business development in distressed neighborhoods, such as the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund. These programs should provide support beyond the financials. They should include proven start-up strategies that nurture new and small businesses to ensure their greater success.

Within the first 100 days, thoroughly review existing programs and ensure collectively there is a holistic model for providing full services for new and small businesses in the distressed and disadvantaged neighborhoods. Identify where gaps exist and provide long-term solutions to close these gaps. Some gaps include lack of access to capital for investing within these communities; or lack of skills and capabilities within startups and small business owners to effectively manage across typical business functions.

A possible solution could be to develop an organization that supports the back-office needs of new and small businesses. This support could be extended to small non-profit organizations that also struggle with back-office processes and operations.

It could be structured like a shared services center or business hub that delivers various operational needs, and/or business functional-area training and guidance to new and small businesses at a practical cost.

**Develop break-through job training and education programs:** Invest in skills-training programs that prepare citizens for a broad range of career opportunities including not only traditional jobs, but also focus on new and emerging job skills.

Identify opportunities in the emerging and growth industries — establish a non-traditional set of jobs, positions and services within the communities where jobs are non-existent. Consider labor and labor opportunities in multiple, new and dynamic ways. Allow participation in various job-types and create employment that spans multiple industries – manufacturing, construction, analytics, call centers, shared service centers, technology, etc. Establish non-traditional employment opportunities within the distressed and disadvantaged communities by skilling up the residents in these communities and partnering with businesses to invest in establishing work centers and creative employment within these communities.

Address the barriers to success in job training and employment such as the lack of access in mental health and counseling services – supporting youth and families in navigating through mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and substance abuses. There is a high rate of depression among the un-and-underemployed due to natural stresses with personal, family and community survival.

Include skill training beyond the technical to enhance communication and other soft skills that enable two-way interaction. There is opportunity and accountability for both the employee and employer to understand cultural and economic differences that lead to sustainable employment.

**Significantly increase focus on Technology, Innovation, and Data Analytics** as tools to propel efficiencies and effectiveness and to drive cutting-edge transformational advancements for the city. Successes in today's economy is largely driven on significant leveraging of technology and use of data to drive decisions.

Institute a technology, data and innovation center for the city with a purpose to identify how technology and data can enhance the management of the city, support the residents in new ways and manage and drive down costs. I believe there exist untapped potential in the leveraging of technology, innovation and data analytics to transform how we continue to grow the city; and, how we can think differently about the revitalization of our distressed and disadvantage neighborhoods.

**Invest in programs that drive violence reduction and elimination of gun violence:** Threats to safety thwart new business development; and residents who can escape such areas will continue to leave.

This is one of the most significant challenges facing the success of neighborhood revitalization and equity towards sustainability.

Invest in sustainable mentoring programs that include mentees across age and developmental statuses. Ensure through effective measures that programs are having a positive impact and are results oriented.

*Exponential versus linear scaling* – leverage process design, data and technology to identify transformational methods to scaling successful programs and initiatives without the one-to-one relational increase to cost. Exponential scaling – moving from a one-to-one model to a one-to-many model of scaling – where appropriate, enables better coverage for the investment. An example of an exponential model versus linear model can be identifying how we move from one-on-one mentoring; to one-to-many mentoring, when it is appropriate.

**Grow neighborhood economics without displacing its current residents.** Economic and social development with gentrification without displacement of residence. There is a need to have a viable mix of racial and ethnic neighborhoods, including an African American community. Provide incentives to retain, and reclaim, a multi-class of residents within the African American neighborhoods.

Engage and involve residents who have ownership and are empowered to revitalize their community and have a strong source of neighborhood pride. This could look-like a focused effort in rebuilding block clubs but also emerging place-focused interventions using technology and social media. It includes investing in community centers and supporting neighborhood organizations.

These recommended components of focusing, building and investing in the revitalization of distressed and disadvantage neighborhoods can drive us to achieve success where all neighborhoods benefits from growth.

Maria Kim, Committee Co-chair  
Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development

## PROPOSED INITIATIVE

Activate a standard for inclusive employment that certifies and celebrates (a) companies that practice inclusive behaviors for sourcing, hiring, and advancing talent from our most disinvested communities, and (b) practitioners that provide the readiness, training and support to present this same talent for consideration.

## INTEGRATION OF VALUES

### EQUITY

Intentional inclusive employment brings equity to Chicago's disinvested neighborhoods by increasing job opportunities for people of all backgrounds. A quality job offers pride, purpose, and growth, which for too long, has not been available to all Chicagoans.

### TRANSPARENCY

Companies are interested in diversifying their workforces and improving our communities, but often do not know how. For employers, this initiative will provide greater transparency into what inclusive employment looks like along with a roadmap to achieve it. For Chicagoans, it will provide greater clarity around the true skills and credentials needed to fill jobs.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Visible certification for employers via a badge will lift up those who embrace inclusive employment practices, while badging for practitioners gives employers greater confidence in the standard of care provided to ready talent for inclusion.

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

With intentional hiring from our communities, our workforce will become increasingly more diverse; and with greater hope through increased employment, residents who have left the city for lack of opportunity will come back home.

### TRANSFORMATION

If the City of Chicago commits to investing in companies that are or want to be inclusive employers, this administration can set a path-breaking tone for inclusive employment in Chicago and around the country.

## WHAT IS HAPPENING TODAY THAT WE SHOULD KEEP

At present, there is growing momentum among companies to hire diverse, locally sourced talent. Companies like Rush University Medical Center, Aon, Accenture, and AT&T have developed mechanisms to increase their diversity through West Side United, The Apprenticeship Network, and Believe Chicago, and Google and Facebook have relaxed their education requirements for technology-related jobs to reduce employment barriers for those without college degrees.

While these companies have made great strides to revamp their hiring guidelines and publicly support more inclusive employment practices, these initiatives are a “work in progress” as it relates to reaching our community residents who face the toughest barriers to employment, at scale. In addition, there are dozens of others who are interested in tapping into the talents of our communities, but do not have the tools, support, or nudge to get there. Other employers do not see inclusive employment as a top priority despite [proven performance benefits](#) and the [social return on investment \(\\$6 created in social cash value for every \\$1 invested\)](#). For the former, this badging system would provide them with the roadmap and support to be inclusive, while for the latter, this badge could be a mechanism to elevate their brand.

## WHAT TO IMPLEMENT IN FIRST 100 DAYS

1. **Create the counsel to vet the proposed badging standard for employers.** A group of providers under LISC-Chicago's One Chicago For All initiative (organizations that represent 1M Chicago residents in our most disinvested communities) has developed a rubric and roadmap for consideration.
2. **Secure commitment from a trusted third party to drive the evaluation of employers.** A trusted entity (e.g. Great Place to Work, Crain's Chicago Business, World Business Chicago or Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce) should be enrolled to proctor the badging process. [No need to do anything yet, just say yes to being the eventual champion of the effort.]
3. **Secure commitment from a trusted third party to drive the evaluation of practitioners.** A research institution (e.g. Poverty Lab) can be employed to interview the practitioners most used by employers who currently exercise inclusivity. From this assessment, the institution can create a standard of services commonly used by successful workforce practitioners and apply this standard to badge those practitioners in compliance. If a practitioner carries this badge, we create immediate scale through which employers may source new talent. [As above, no need to do anything yet, just say yes to being the eventual champion of the effort.]

Prioritizing this early in the Mayor's tenure would: (a) demonstrate the administration's proactive commitment to this issue, and (b) serve as the basis for subsequent roadmaps and tools to increase inclusive employment. During this time, we also recommend developing a plan for funding the sourcing and wraparound support community organizations will provide employers to make this a reality – an incentive for both employers (who benefit) and the providers who could expand their services to directly serve inclusive employers.

## WHAT TO IMPLEMENT LONGER-TERM

1. **Gain consensus on the tiers of inclusivity and finalize the standard for employers.**
2. **Identify early adopters in a few key verticals and apply the standard in a quiet phase.** Ascertain the level at which they're performing and the toolkits (e.g. how to demystify the various components of a criminal background, how to identify what besides traditional education can constitute a solid – and sometimes stronger – proxy for a candidate's capacity for a job) required to help these employers incrementally advance over time.
3. **Publish toolkits that help show how employers can easily advance in their inclusivity.** Activate peer-to-peer mentorship to help interested employers become inclusive employers. Integrate new insights into next generation versions of the toolkit for ongoing viability and include case studies on successes and best practices.
4. **Publicly award and affirm companies for their advancement on inclusivity.**
5. **Lather, rinse repeat for the standard for practitioners.**

## CHALLENGES WE MIGHT ENCOUNTER

This initiative will not be without its challenges. The first will be identifying and coalescing the field around what is working. Many employers and community organizations are fragmented, so creating a useful body of knowledge on best practices will require diligence and investigative research. Secondly, it is common for policymakers to come out with a standard, and not provide implementers with the tools and resources necessary. As a result, it isn't implemented properly and the initiative is deemed a failure. Making this initiative a success will not just be about talking the talk, but ensuring the companies and community organizations have the connections and tools to make it work.

Overall, there is growing momentum to improve inclusive employment across our city. It is desired by individuals who want to work, companies who want to be more connected to their communities, and the City who wants to see greater economic inclusion. While there is a will, we currently don't have a way. A badging system will provide just that, and ensure that people from all Chicago neighborhoods participate in and benefit from Chicago's prosperity.



To: Co-Chairs *Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Transition Committee*  
*For Mayor-elect Lightfoot*

From: Marie Trzupek Lynch, CEO, Skills for Chicagoland's Future

Re: **Idea Generation: Jobs 77**

Date: 4/15/2019

**Idea: Launch "Jobs 77" – a new initiative that integrates and leverages the power and impact of economic and workforce development to simultaneously attract businesses to Chicago and address the existing employment gap in all 77 neighborhoods while rapidly scaling nonprofit workforce programs to support the demands of companies to find local talent.**

As 2019 began, Chicago's unemployment rate was 3.6%. Unfortunately, the statistic masks a harsh reality. While some neighborhoods are experiencing a prosperous economy, many are not. 74% of Chicago neighborhoods have greater than 3.6% unemployment and 35% have double-digit unemployment. Chicago's tale of two cities is stark with two segments of the population especially vulnerable to economic disparity: individuals with only a high school degree and African Americans. Lower levels of education attainment correlate with higher unemployment. Additionally, African Americans in Chicago are unemployed at a rate five times higher than the citywide average.

The Mayor's Office has the unique ability to attract the business community to locate some or all of their operations in Chicago and its neighborhoods, and to introduce effective ways to partner with workforce programs to access untapped local talent to meet current and anticipated hiring needs. There are four critical components of Jobs 77 that lead to both economic and workforce growth.

- It will integrate and leverage the economic and workforce development sectors to create a force of change to reduce the existing employment gap and level unemployment rates across our neighborhoods.
- It will involve leadership from the Mayor's Office to recruit businesses to Chicago and our neighborhoods. Attracting 5-10 new businesses to Chicago, along with localized hiring, can bring thousands of new jobs and opportunities for residents.
- It will scale and expand innovative nonprofit solutions and initiatives that have a proven track record of impact in placing adult and youth job seekers from across Chicago's neighborhoods into direct entry, career pathway, pre-apprenticeship, and apprenticeship jobs.
- The long-term success and sustainability of this initiative will require the creation of a new or substantial expansion of an existing funding mechanism to meaningfully support the growth, scaling and expansion of workforce-focused nonprofits as well as programs that provide supportive services and case management to job seekers and those placed in jobs.

**Infusing the Values of Equity, Transparency, Accountability, Diversity, Inclusion and Transformation into the Initiative:**

- Publicly share the Mayor's Office commitment to the initiative across social media platforms, on City and business focused websites, and at the local level in Chicago's neighborhoods - full transparency.





- Include and invite a full and diverse range of nonprofits, initiatives and community organizations to contribute to sharing best practices and participating in the inventory of workforce resources.
- Model the values at the City of Chicago by considering locating more City operated functions in Chicago's neighborhoods, especially those with high unemployment and poverty rates.
- Utilize a Deputy Mayor in the Mayor's Office to monitor and report on progress related to the initiative. Continue to monitor and report out on neighborhood unemployment and poverty rates.
- Celebrate and promote businesses that model equity, diversity and inclusion in their hiring practices in Chicago.

**Strategies to Continue Supporting Include:**

- Positioning workforce organizations as the drivers of impact as well as incubators of new workforce development approaches to grow and scale. Continue to champion this work at the Mayoral level.
- Facilitating corporate and business engagement across the city and in historically disinvested neighborhoods.
- Continuing to recruit and retain businesses to take root in Chicago neighborhoods and hire local residents.

**Within the Next 100 Days We Should:**

- Meet with a roundtable of CEOs to seek their input and perspective on what is currently effective for them and what is missing in the workforce ecosystem.
- Create an inventory of existing programs and categorize the workforce space. Consider grouping programs with both a business access view as well as job seeker view by demand-driven (business facing), supply-driven (job seeker facing), and/or supportive services/case management organizations. Invite organizations to self-categorize and share their impact across Chicago's neighborhoods.
- Conduct an expansive learning and site visit tour to view promising nonprofit programs and initiatives-in-action in order to allow for championing.
- Establish a Deputy Mayor of Economic and Workforce Development in the Mayor's Office, create a job description, and begin the hiring process for this position.

**The Plan for Longer-Term Implementation will Include:**

- Effective promotion, scaling and evaluation of scaled workforce programs.
- Continual reinvestment in a fund to annually scale and support effective workforce development and supportive services programs.
- Seek public and private funding at the national level via the Mayor's Office/City of Chicago for broad and larger scale, multi-organizational initiatives which harness collaboration.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of programs across neighborhoods to ensure unemployment disparity declines.

**What Challenges We Might Encounter in Executing on this Initiative:**

- Merging longer-term business hiring outlooks with immediately available community based training and placement strategies.
- Identifying sustainable funding for the proposed workforce development fund.

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
From: Matthew Muench  
RE: Business, Economic and Neighborhood Development Committee  
Date: April 15, 2019

**Potential Initiative:** Equity in Tech: Launch a large-scale collaborative to make the city the national leader in diversity, equity and inclusion in tech careers, while helping grow Chicago's tech economy.

### Challenge and Opportunity

Chicago has attracted major corporate office relocations and expansions by large and small technology firms, and it boasts an exciting start-up scene getting increasing national attention and investment. At the same time, most other companies in the city that we wouldn't consider "tech" companies depend on technology *and tech-capable staff* to remain competitive, such as with manufacturers using robotics and programmed machines, banks or airlines interacting with customers via apps, etc. For Chicago to continue attracting new firms and growing our own, we need to up our tech talent game and proactively serve businesses' talent needs.

These technology jobs—in tech firms or with other firms requiring tech skills—are among our highest paying. And in the near future, almost *any* good job will require facility with technology and data. This underscores the importance of preparing young adults with the right skills, and to ensure our city continues to attract and grow companies. In doing this, it is imperative that the city ensure equitable access to these jobs. Right now, the best tech jobs tend to go to individuals of white or Asian descent, men, and those from more affluent backgrounds. Chicago should be proactive in expanding access to these careers for communities of color, low-income communities, and women. This could change the economic trajectory of individuals, families and communities left out of the city's growth.

### The Initiative

You can harness this moment of opportunity by launching a large-scale collaborative to grow Chicago's tech economy while making the city the national leader in tech-sector diversity, equity and inclusion. This initiative would involve:

- Program coordination. The city has many good programs related to tech skills, but they are too rarely connected to each other in a way that enables somebody to build learning and experience along a pathway;
- Aligning economic and workforce development strategy and operations within the Mayor's Office to better serve business needs while maximizing access to the best career opportunities for those historically left out;
- A movement—joining with P33—to engage more businesses, and to engage them more richly, in ways they can support equitable talent pipelines and then support their own diverse staffs to thrive in tech careers;
- Equity at the center. Joint leadership with those organizations best able to represent communities of color, low-income communities, and women; and
- Holding ourselves collectively accountable for our performance as a city, and as a collaborative of public and private partners, through agreed metrics and transparent sharing of data.

The good news is that Chicago already has momentum and several building blocks to make this ambitious initiative successful and transformative. Examples of what is happening today that *we should keep and build upon*:

- City Colleges' Office of Apprenticeship and Workforce Solutions, and their new tech bootcamp offerings;
- CPS Early College STEM Schools, and new efforts to embed more work-based learning in Career Tech Ed;
- One Summer Chicago's Everyone Can Code partnership with Apple;
- Partnerships between our education systems (CPS, CCC) and nonprofits (e.g., YearUp, GenesysWorks);
- Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership new "Chicago Codes" program on the South Side; and
- Director of Workforce Innovation position recently created within the Mayor's Office to help coordinate these various pieces and engage with business and economic development activities.

And we have many *great partners* to work with:

- *Business*: P33, World Business Chicago, Chamber of Commerce, Microsoft, Apple, etc.
- *Voices for Equity*: Black Tech Mecca, Latinas in Tech, AnitaB, SheLeadsTech, Noirefy, Chicago United for Equity, etc.
- *Education and Training Systems*: UIUC, UIC, DePaul, Northwestern, Illinois Tech, City Colleges of Chicago, CPS (including CS4All, CTE), Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, etc.
- *Other Partners*: 1871, Digital Youth Network, Chicago Learning Exchange, ISTI/ISTC, Skills for Chicagoland's Future, Thrive, i.c.stars, Catalyte, DodingDojo, National Able, Chicago Urban League, Austin Coming Together, etc.

#### *First 100 Days*

- Produce a market study of both tech industry verticals and cross-cutting tech occupations in Chicago, including pathways, credentials, current education and training providers, wages, diversity, etc.;
- Map the existing programs, resources, funding streams, etc. that could be arrayed to support this initiative;
- Create a tailor-able “menu” of tech training and education options for companies considering moving to Chicago or needing assistance with growth in the city;
- Agree internal City policies and processes for embedding equity-in-tech goals in economic development strategy and business negotiations; and
- Convene a table to shape this initiative, identifying shared vision, defining partnerships with existing entities doing good work on this issue, etc. Potential partners are noted above.

#### *First Year*

- Conduct assessment for creating up to three new incubators in South and West Side neighborhoods, and make go/no-go decisions on their launch;
- Evaluate potential for targeting IT infrastructure and tech-support contracts to organizations that provide career pathway opportunities to communities underrepresented in tech;
- Redesign some “One Summer Chicago” programs starting in 2020 to support this initiative by connecting summer experiences to pathways in partnership with CPS, City Colleges and the Workforce Partnership; and
- Identify a “quarterback” entity to take over the day-to-day coordination of the effort from the Mayor’s Office.

#### *Longer Term Reality*

- Social sector and business stakeholders have a common understanding of equity-in-tech goals and needs;
- The city provides concierge service to help start-ups, large firms, and relocating companies meet talent needs;
- Young Chicagoans of color and women see clear paths to good tech jobs; and
- People are moving to Chicago to be part of its thriving and diverse technology scene.

#### **Alignment with Values**

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are the targeted outcomes of this work. But it should also embed equity in the structure and process of the initiative through collaborative decision-making led by organizations representing communities of color and women. This can be reinforced with collective accountability built around transparent use of data. For example, the city should consider adapting/adopting the *Black Tech Ecosystem City Assessment Framework* put out by Black Tech Mecca. If the city does this successfully, and accelerates economic growth while making Chicago the national leader in tech-career DEI, it will be transformative for our region, and a model for the country.

#### **Alignment with Objectives**

This initiative would most directly advance the objective you have set *to ensure all individuals have opportunities to participate in the region’s economic vitality*. Indeed, its immediate goals are:

- Ensuring Chicagoans of all races, ethnicities and gender-identities have the foundational skills, exposure, and social capital to access and thrive in the high-wage tech jobs; and
- Helping Chicago businesses be intentional about expanding exposure and access to their tech jobs, and provide the environment and supports to create diverse, inclusive and equitable work environments and career pathways.

This will also advance the two other objectives for this committee:

- It will *promote regional economic growth* by: addressing the tech talent needs of local businesses, helping them adapt, compete and grow; making the city more attractive for tech and tech-reliant companies considering locating operations in Chicago; and attracting more young adults to the city who will see Chicago as a place where tech talent of color can thrive in corporate or start-up businesses.
- It will *ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth*, directly by building incubators that will generate foot traffic and economic activity in disinvested neighborhoods; and indirectly through increased purchasing power of individuals from the neighborhoods who will be getting these jobs.

Finally, note that this initiative supports two of your goals for improving the schools: Expanding Career Pathways for high school students; and creating “learning pathways” in After-School Programs “that make it easier for youth to connect opportunities that develop from interest to passion to internship/work experience.”



TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot  
FROM: MarySue Barrett, President, Metropolitan Planning Council

### Ensure all neighborhoods benefit from growth.

#### Re-structure team to coordinate decision-making and maximize impact:

Chicago has seen tremendous economic development during the past mayoral administration. Yet this development often proceeds in haphazard, piecemeal fashion with limited input from relevant city agencies and civic/community partners. Better planning and coordination across city departments, sister agencies and other financial and community development experts and would maximize the effectiveness of investments in businesses, community assets, and vital infrastructure. While there is no one perfect structure, below are some ideas to foster coordination for greater impact:

#### **Immediate**

- Utilize all transition team committee recommendations to begin to institutionalize coordination across departments, agencies, and other relevant public and private entities.

#### **First 100 days**

- Create a subcabinet within the mayor's administration tasked with cross-consulting on investments before they are made, applying a racial equity impact assessment and broad performance metrics. Require members of this subcabinet to coordinate execution of development projects, and measure the impact of cross-department and cross-agency collaboration. ([MPC's analysis](#) of Chicago Neighborhoods Initiative work over a decade in Pullman points to the value of this approach)

#### **First year**

- Revive Chicago Neighborhoods Now framework, which created 16 districts to gather information and now has the potential to execute on comprehensive neighborhood development goals. Refresh data and create action plans with community input.

#### Think and act like a regional partner

Chicago has withdrawn from meaningful, collaborative engagement with neighboring suburbs, and with likeminded cities throughout the Great Lakes. Despite being a founding member of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, Chicago has disengaged in recent years, with harmful results in Springfield, Washington D.C., and at home.

#### **Immediate:**

- The City of Chicago, and the Mayor personally, should reengage with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and work toward collaborative solutions on workforce, housing, traditional and reverse commuting, regional economic development, the Greenest Region Compact, and more.
- The city and Mayor should reengage with the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to advocate for and implement solutions on lead in drinking water systems, climate change, invasive species and protection of the planet's greatest reserve of available fresh drinking water.

#### Invest in transit to grow our regional economy

Businesses throughout the region rely on and benefit from metropolitan Chicago's transit system. Talent needs transit. A growing and thriving transit system means a growing and thriving economy. Research shows that businesses locate near transit to access larger labor pools, businesses located near transit are more resilient, and transit-accessible locations outperform the regional average on job growth, especially near rail.

#### **Immediate:**

- Advocate for a State sustainable funding bill that delivers at least \$4 billion annually. Ensure that it includes provisions for a quantifiable, data-driven project selection process. Advocate for funding of multimodal projects, with at least 30 percent allocated to transit (which currently has no ongoing state capital funding).

#### **First Year Actions and Goals**

- Assess recommendations of Mayor's Transportation and Mobility Task Force report.
- Establish a Chief Mobility Officer who can oversee interagency coordination, innovation and pilot projects.
- Invest in infrastructure to increase speed and reliability of CTA's highest-ridership bus routes, particularly along transit corridors in need of increased economic development such as the newly designated bus TOD corridors.

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# Metropolitan Planning Council

- Invest in infrastructure to increase speed and reliability of CTA's highest-ridership bus routes, particularly along transit corridors in need of increased economic development such as the newly designated bus TOD corridors.

## First Term Goals

- Create employer-based mobility incentives that support public transit use. For example, subsidize 30-Day transit passes, incentivize cycling, and discourage parking subsidies in transit-rich locations.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to support overall safe walkability and transit access.

## Support equitable development near transit

The Transit Oriented Development Ordinance (updated in 2015 and 2019) yielded dense, more pedestrian-oriented development in some corridors. However, the distribution of development reveals disparities in growth and investment. An equity focused framework is needed to enhance the TOD ordinance with additional tools to share benefits across all Chicago neighborhoods.

## 100 Day Actions

- Appoint a TOD Coordinator within the Mayor's Office to serve as the primary point of contact regarding TOD and to coordinate work across all relevant city departments and agencies.
- Commit to a minimum of two pilot projects where recommendations can be evaluated.
- Complete the eTOD implementation plan by July 2020, allocating city resources as necessary.

## First Year Actions and Goals

- Finalize eTOD Implementation Plan
- Launch demonstration pilots in different markets. Create incentives for employers that locate or expand near transit

## First Term Goals

- Complete pilots, document the process and evaluate immediate and long-term outcomes within an equity framework.
- Determine need for additional changes to the TOD Ordinance based on lessons learned from assessment and pilot projects.

## Enhance how we share the benefits of development

The City of Chicago has been a leader redistributing the benefits of development in rising real estate markets across the city. These initiatives should be improved and expanded.

### Neighborhood Opportunity Fund:

- Turn the Fund into an upfront grant rather than reimbursements which today creates a barrier for small business

### Industrial Corridor Fund:

- Create an overall and individual zoning and land use strategy for all 26 of the City's Industrial Corridors, in consultation with local, regional, and national experts.
- Define parameters around how industrial corridor funds will be prioritized and distributed (and in what forms), with information publicly available.

## 100 Day Actions

- Meet with CDFIs and other impact investors to identify leverage opportunities.
- Scope out process for creating a comprehensive plan for the industrial corridor system.
- Clarify eligible expenses for reimbursable funding.

## First Year Actions and Goals

- Convene construction project managers, project lending coaches, and CDFIs to ensure all are flourishing.
- Complete comprehensive plans for industrial corridors with individual corridor plans underway and prioritized projects receiving funding.

## First Term Goals

- Evaluate financial tools within a racial equity framework to ensure that they are achieving their goals.



MarySue Barrett  
President  
Metropolitan Planning Council

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

**FROM:** Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Committee Member

**PROMPT:** Establish a professional service contracting initiative designed to increase contracting opportunities with local minority and women-owned businesses within the legal (including minority and women partners within majority law firms), money management, marketing, advertising/communications, financial services, human resources and information technology industries.

There is great potential to increase economic opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses within the professional services industries. Professional service industries constitute the fastest growing portion of our economy and are a significant contributor to high-wage employment. However, minority and women-owned professional service firms in Chicago remain substantially underutilized. Historically, opportunities deemed appropriate for minorities have been heavily concentrated within construction, landscaping and other low hanging fruit areas. While the wealth generating industries and industries where our youth are essentially being educated have been reserved for majority-owned businesses and minorities and women remain left out of the equation.

**Infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:**

This administration has an opportunity to transform how government, non-profits, foundations, educational institutions and corporations in Chicago approach contracting and business diversity. Equity and inclusion would mean that diverse businesses not only get a seat at the table but also obtain opportunities within these professional industries that have historically been difficult for them to penetrate. Establishing goals and reporting diverse spend would be necessary for accountability and transparency.

**What is happening today that we need to keep:**

There are certain entities leading the charge for professional services. For example, Exelon and the University of Chicago both have successful professional service contracting initiatives.

**Within the next 100 days:**

- Form a committee to research current initiatives, and create the business



case for professional services.

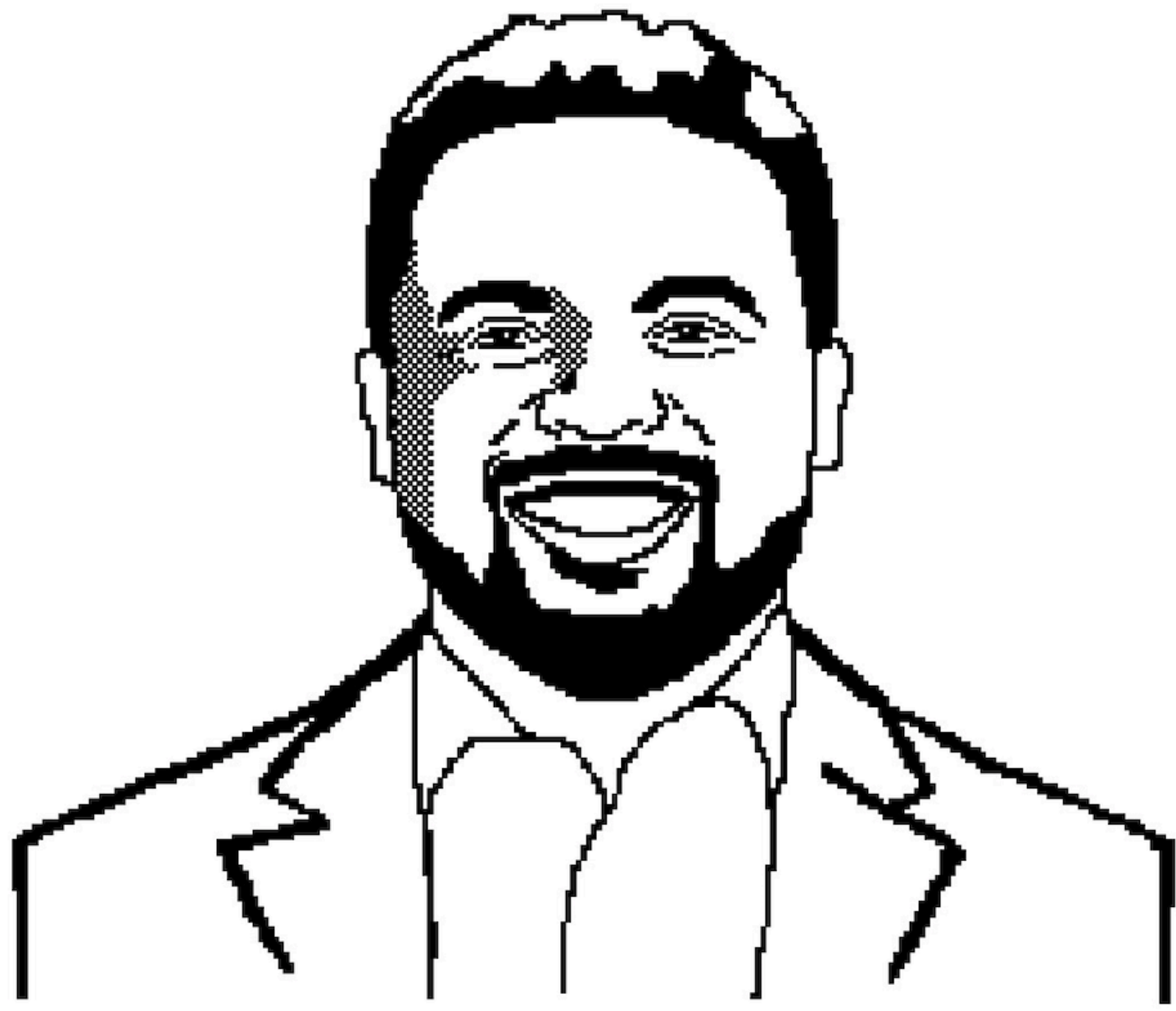
- Develop a strategy to incorporate goals around professional services.
- Start small; obtain a commitment from a small number of City agencies, non-profits, foundations, corporations and anchor institutions to hire local MWBE professional service firms.

A City-wide professional service contracting program would be something that will require longer-term implementation.

**Challenges/Barriers:**

- These opportunities are highly relationship driven and don't always go through normal procurement/RFP channels.
- Because of long-standing relationships, it is difficult for MWBE's to obtain opportunities.
- There is a perception that MWBE's are novices and do not have sufficient experience within their industries.

# Attract big companies, but not at the expense of residents



*“While we must work to attract large businesses to our city, we cannot provide tax breaks without stipulated investments and jobs for our neighborhoods. We must ensure they pay their fair share to participate in our city.” - Neal Sáles-Griffin*

## What does success look like?

1. Corporation's consider Chicago as a competitive advantage.
2. Housing rates don't spike as a result of new corporate developments.
3. Large corporations are not given unfair tax breaks.
4. Local Communities feel their voice is considered in new developments.

## Action Steps

1. Focus on Chicago's pool of talented labor, public transportation, and local colleges instead of tax incentives to attract corporations.
2. Expand and enforce the Affordable Requirements Ordinance.
3. Require contract for new business to hire from the community.
4. Hold community forums when large business contracts are in negotiation.

## Performance Metrics

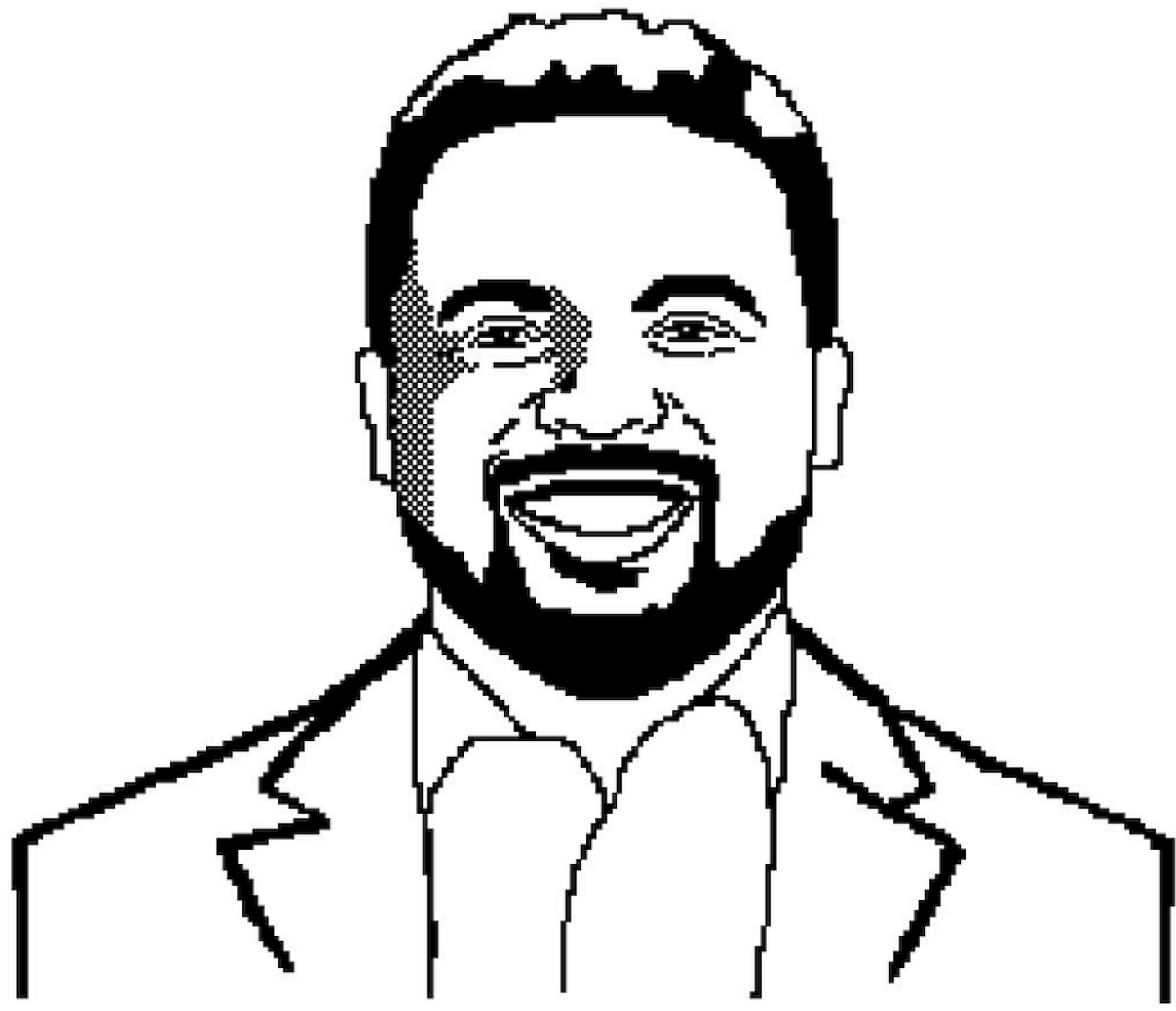
- # of big companies considering or expanding in Chicago
- # of residents displaced by new developments
- % of jobs hired from community (as opposed to transplants)
- # Community forums hosted in the bid / zoning process

## References

- [City of Chicago Affordable Requirements Ordinance](#)
- [2-45-115 2015 affordable requirements.](#)
- [Chicago Sun-Times, Emmanuel to unveil preservation strategy for Pilsen and Little Village Times](#)



# Fight for a \$15 minimum wage



*"A \$15 dollar minimum wage is necessary for Chicagoans to cover their basic needs. While Chicago's progress on the minimum wage fight exemplifies a sorely needed win for workers' rights, we still have a long road ahead of us." - Neal Sáles-Griffin*

## What does success look like?

1. Employment levels among minimum wage cohort remain flat or increase (indicating no damaging effects to industry).
2. Non-tipped workers are paid the minimum wage of \$15/hour by or before 7/1/21.
3. Chicago's public is readily informed about the wage increase.
4. City officials work with private business to ensure seamless wage increases and feel supported in this transition.

## Action Steps

1. Extend the city's minimum wage law with 50 cents increases every six months until the wage reaches \$15 an hour.
2. Require an annual review of the city's minimum wages by the Office of Labor Standards at the City of Chicago.
3. Promote wage increases through Business Affairs and Consumer Protection Office.

## Performance Metrics

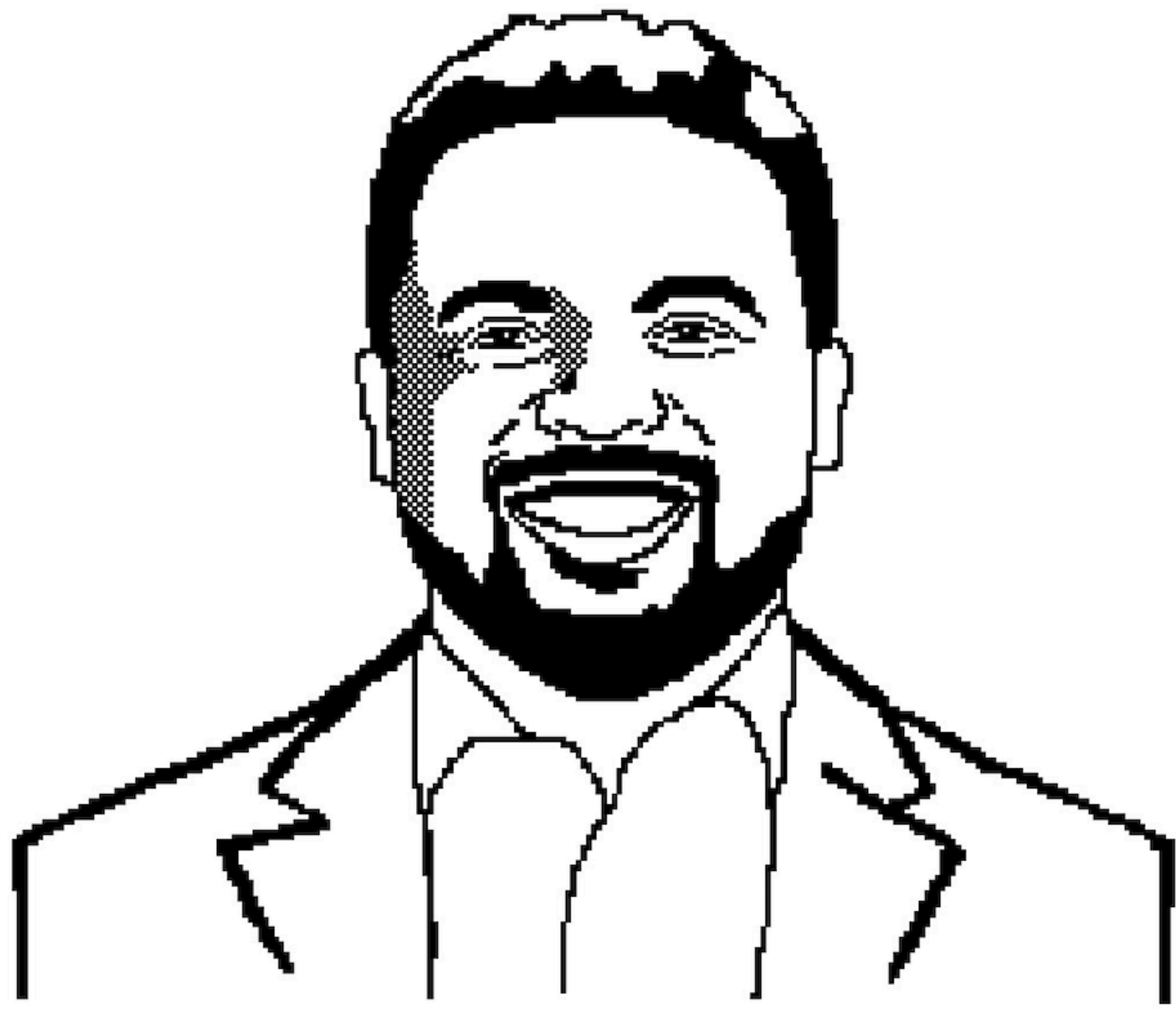
- % of Chicago workers being paid the minimum wage
- # incremental wage adjustments per year
- % of workforce earning min. wage remains constant or growing
- # of hours min wage employed does NOT reduce as a result of wage increase

## References

- [Chicago Tribune, "Chicago Minimum Wage Hike Not A Killer"](#)
- [Raising the Min Wage: What \\$10, \\$13, or \\$15 per hr would mean for IL](#)
- [Economic Policy Institute: Why America Needs a \\$15 Minimum Wage](#)
- [Amendment of Municipal Code Sections 2-25-050, 2-92-320, 2-92-610, 4-4-320](#)
- [The Chicago Minimum Wage Ordinance](#)



# Create an office of Vocational Training and Employment



*"I helped launch and was an original tenant of 1871 alongside JB Pritzker. We've helped thousands get their start in well-paying tech jobs in Chicago. I'll be relentless in providing every Chicagoan with the resources and education they need to thrive in this city with meaningful job opportunities."*  
- Neal Sáles-Griffin

## What does success look like?

1. The business community has partners in City hall to develop relevant workforces for their industry.
2. Students have enriching apprentice opportunities to enter the workforce no matter their interests.
3. Students of all ages are enlisting and staying in vocational programs because of the value it provides for them.
4. Chicago has a clear plan for emerging market needs and is building a pipeline to service these new jobs.

## Action Steps

1. Create the Office of Vocational Training and Employment which in its first year will focus on setting goals and budgets required for future success.
2. Create a council of community business leaders who direct future job needs.
3. Identify key pathways for vocational and tech training from partner agencies across the city.
4. Launch longitudinal study tracking the Office of Vocational Training and Employment.

## Performance Metrics

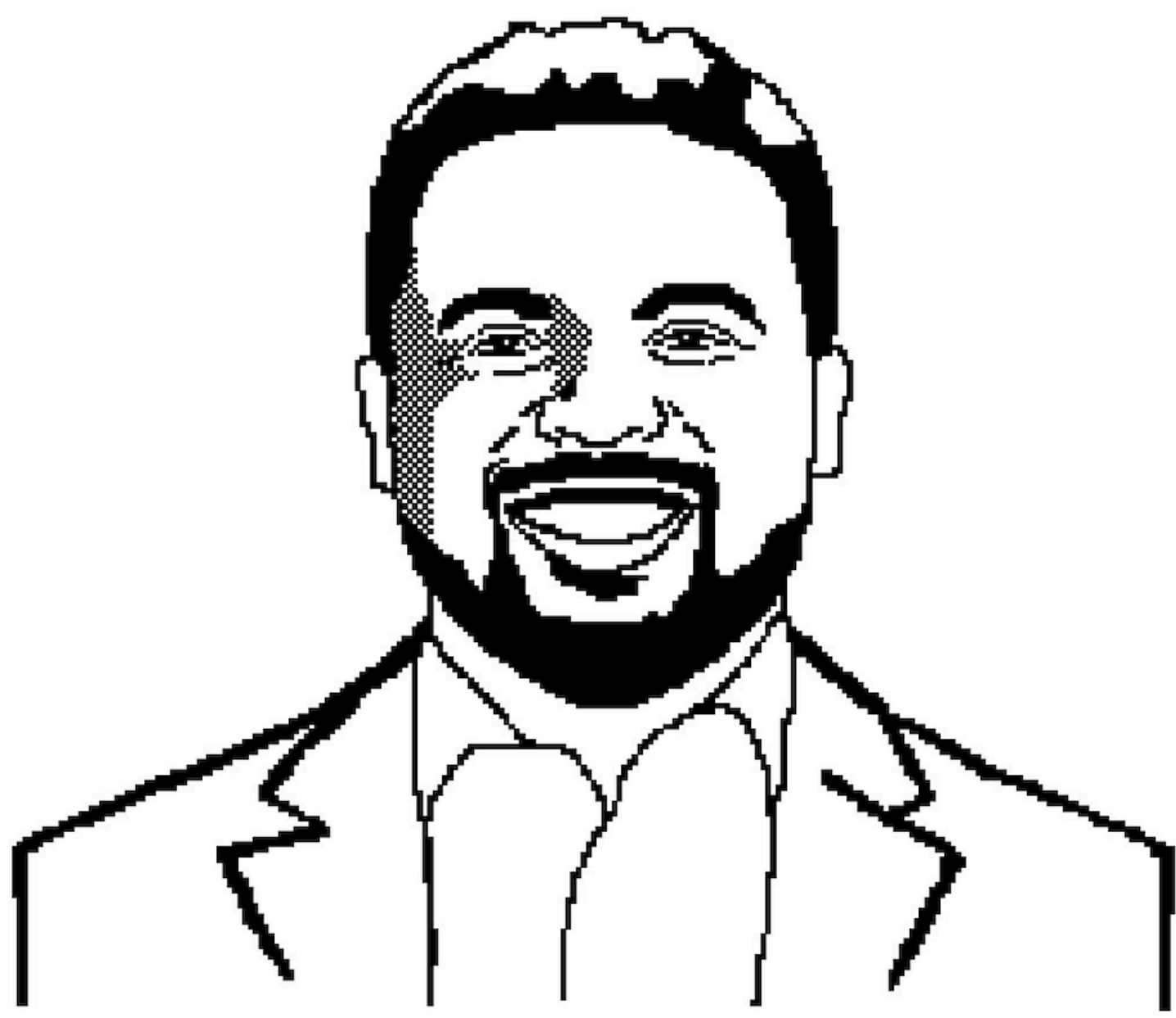
- % matriculation from vocational programs
- % of high school students enrolled in vocational training
- # of skilled laborers on the job market per year
- Average salary and working conditions of vocational students

## References

- [New York City Tech Talent Pipeline](#)
- [North Carolina Workforce Development and Training](#)
- [City Journal: Vocational Education and America's Highschools](#)
- [Crains Chicago: City Colleges inspector slams troubled program](#)
- [Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership](#)



# Invest in businesses owned by Chicagoans



*"I've personally experienced the frustrations of doing business in Chicago. I'll simplify permit requirements, eliminate unfair fees and fines, and streamline what the city mandates to start a business. It should be a boon to your business to be built in Chicago, not a burden." - Neal Sáles-Griffin*

## What does success look like?

1. New businesses are forming at an increasing rate annually.
2. Women and minority-run businesses are supported by Chicago and contracts are equitably awarded to these businesses.
3. Filing for a business license and MWVBE certification isn't overwhelming; the process is clearly communicated.
4. Grants and investments are readily available to small business owners.
5. Business owners don't feel blind sided by tickets or city taxes.
6. Turnaround time for acquiring a business license and MWVBE certification is reduced.

## Action Steps

1. Conduct interviews with Chicagoans at various stages of owning a business to get insight into hurdles they face.
2. Conduct an audit of Office of Business Affairs and Consumer Protections Small Business Centers to improve services
3. Provide businesses with access to low interest rate loans insured by the city.
4. Assist small businesses in competitively bidding for city government contracts.

## Performance Metrics

- # of small businesses year over year
- # of jobs added by small business per year
- % of city contracts awarded to Chicago-based small businesses
- Amount of \$ invested in small businesses
- # of business licenses obtained annually
- % of vacant store fronts
- Occupancy and graduation rates of Chicago's business incubators
- Avg time it takes to return a business license

## References

- [City of Chicago Small Business Development Centers](#)
- [Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce "State of Small Business"](#)

# BORDERLESS

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Paola Aguirre Serrano, Founder, Borderless Studio. Chicago United for Equity Fellow 2018-19.

RE: Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Transition Committee

DATE: April 15, 2019

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The following initial recommendations have been developed using Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) as a guiding framework developed by [Chicago United for Equity](#)<sup>1</sup>. Although the REIA tool has not been comprehensively applied to the initiative and content below, it has been (and will continue to be) a strong reference for advancing and refining these narratives and descriptions.

### Objective:

**Ensure all neighborhoods participate in, and contribute to, regional economic growth.**

### Potential Initiative:

**Create a community-driven investment framework that focuses in building competencies (leadership) and capacities (infrastructure) at the community scale.**

This initiative encompasses two main components for equitable governance, deployment, assessment and accountability:

- Creation of a **Neighborhood Impact Investment Council** consisting of community development corporations, finance institutions and neighborhood services organizations to inform local investment policies, needs and priorities. This council will perform as a platform for community representatives to advance their leadership capacity at the local and city-wide scale while connecting to resources and assets in the region.
- Build and strengthen **local investment infrastructure** that creatively uses public, civic and private forms of capital while catalyzing new investment and partnership opportunities in the South and West sides of Chicago.
- Integrate **Racial Equity Impact Assessment** framework and process to both of these components.

### Core concepts for this initiative:

- Active role of the City as partner in community development by creating connections between neighborhood and regional scale organizations.
- Increase “capital absorption” in neighborhoods through investment in building competency (leadership) and capacity (infrastructure) at neighborhood scale.
- Assembly of larger neighborhood areas to identify broader areas of impact enabling collective consensus related to investment prioritization instead of a competitive allocation of resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)'s "Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity." Find resources at our website [www.chicagounitedforequity.org](http://www.chicagounitedforequity.org).



# BORDERLESS

- Integration of participatory budgeting conceptual framework into decision-making process for investment prioritization.

## Connecting Initiative to Values

- **Equity:** Chicago needs frameworks and tools to counter systemic disinvestment impacting communities of color. An inclusive and equitable framework for community-investment will intentionally consider the perspectives and priorities of residents from underserved black and brown communities.
- **Transparency:** An equitable and transparent framework will counter discretionary, single-sided and narrow processes and practices for prioritization of investment.
- **Accountability:** Equitable community investment requires principles for impact assessment and inclusive governance structure – stakeholders participating in investment decision making processes will be accountable to both.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** The Neighborhood Impact Investment Council will bring a diversity of perspectives, experiences and expertise for a highly informed decision-making and consensus process.
- **Transformation:** Decision-making processes for investment in neighborhoods cannot be isolated decisions. Both “soft” (people) and “hard” (resources) infrastructures are needed to impact positively quality of life, generation of wealth for families and opportunities for economic mobility.

## And as it pertains to this initiative

- What is happening today that we need to keep
  - **Capital access programs** led by the City of Chicago such as the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) should be more than a granting program; NOF should be the opportunity to build entrepreneurial leadership in neighborhoods if equipped with stronger support, training and assessment resources for small business owners.
- What we need to implement in the next 100 days
  - Integrate a task force to design a **community-driven investment framework** and its two main components.
  - Assess and recalibrate Neighborhood Opportunity Fund program to **advance neighborhood economic leadership capacity**.
- What we can plan for longer-term implementation
  - Define a new kind of **local investment infrastructure** – Chicago has ample resources and tremendous creative capacity to become a national model for equitable neighborhood investment. The City needs to claim and leverage its capacity to build new and productive partnerships among public, private and civic sectors that create new opportunities for economic growth in communities of color.
- What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative
  - Chicago has a strong tribal culture. Decades of disinvestment and aggressive competition for resources have resulted in a culture of divided communities looking for boundaries instead of areas of connection. It will take a strong effort to counter the practices of exclusion and rebuild trust among different stakeholders.

4/15/2019

**To: Neighborhood Development Transition Committee**

**From: Philip Fuentes**

**Memo:**

## **Economic growth in all neighborhoods**

**I propose working with the Chicago Housing Authority ( CHA ), the Regional Transit Authority ( RTA ) service boards, and the Chicago Transit Authority ( CTA ) Metro, Pace and ADA Transit to achieve economic growth in all neighborhoods.**

**The CHA geographical area encompasses the entire metro area and the Transit agencies have stations and stops throughout the city and already participate in economic development. Exploring opportunities utilizing their resources and data should be considered. Such as:**

- **Applying for the various agencies partnership programs;**
- **Partnering whenever possible for Federal and State programs and grants ;**
- **Identifying specific geographical areas for growth during the planning process;**
- **Sharing feasibility studies data with both community organizations and private sector developers; and,**
- **Insuring open lines of communications to avoid duplications of efforts to save costs.**

**These agencies already utilize community involvement working with neighborhood organizations and public hearings. Minority and neighborhood small business goals already are incorporated in all of their projects.**

**However, we need to work with community organizations both neighborhood and citywide to develop attractive opportunities for businesses to grow in all neighborhoods in conjunction with these agencies. Accessing information from feasibility , demographic and transportation studies is one of the keys.**

**Offering business planning and financial assistance whenever possible.**

**Providing small businesses to have this data from CHA and Transit agencies will reduce planning costs and help in their ability to receive financing. Also, businesses know CHA and the Transit agencies are committed to insuring diversity and inclusion . Especially in regards to always improving access for people with disabilities.**

**Therefore, knowing businesses invest in communities with residential growth and access to affordable transportation for both residents and more importantly employees. I propose expanding our relationship with CHA and RTA service Board's CTA, Metra and Pace.**





To: **Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot**

From: **Perry Gunn**

Date: **April 15, 2019**

Re: **Boosting Employment Opportunities through TIF and Opportunity Zone Projects**

Chicago can boost employment opportunities in underserved communities by requiring all publically funded projects such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Opportunity Zone Fund projects add a direct employment stipulation. By doing this, the City can create jobs in neighborhoods that need them the most, while working closely with businesses and corporations to provide jobs, recruitment and training.

Moving forward, your administration can use this initiative to build a stronger workforce and transform neighborhoods as permanent jobs are created and positive impacts are made on the local economy.

As it pertains to this proposed plan, the City should continue to:

- Require that all TIF funded projects continue reporting to the Department of Planning the number of jobs created and retained

#### **WHAT WE NEED TO IMPLEMENT IMMEDIATELY**

Develop City requirements for TIF projects that include:

- Using TIF works to accompany TIF tax credits to support job training in construction jobs in the beginning and permanent jobs down the road
- If there are no TIF works funds available the project should work directly with local unions, City departments and local community organizations
- Small business development should be complimented with TIF and Opportunity Zone Funds
- Small businesses should be supported alongside public opportunities such as these by either having them be a part of the City and local organizations supporting them to be scaled up to support these efforts.
- Increase funding to support more TIF works projects for businesses that are located in TIF districts.
- The City must move away from the Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) and Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) rebates only, and consider instead distributing through grants that can have broken down payments. This is to make sure businesses that may not have a lot of capital can still apply and maximize the opportunities.

## **PAGE TWO**

Many of the ideas listed above were inspired by the work we did with the new Englewood Square Development in the Englewood community. With that particular TIF project, we trained over 1,000 people, supported 40 small businesses and secured a permanent job training site at the local Starbucks. We learned several best practices that should be included in new updated TIF policies. Some of the lessons learned included: creating a customized workforce development plan to meet the needs of several companies in Englewood Square Development, engaging community stakeholders in pre-and post-conversations around community benefits, and establishing local representatives to serve as the group that holds all stakeholders accountable.

**WHAT WE CAN PLAN FOR LONGER TERM IMPLEMENTATION**

Create a Community Benefit position in the Department of Planning that will follow up with TIF and Opportunity Zone reporting. This will help increase accountability as well as allow the City to share the actual results in a transparent manner.

**WHAT CHALLENGES WE MIGHT ENCOUNTER IN EXECUTING THIS INITIATIVE**

It might be difficult to effectively monitor the success of this initiative unless a strong evaluation system is put into place. We must work closely with entities that possess the knowledge and skills to help the City track overall progress of TIF and similar projects.

April 15, 2019

Memorandum

Name: Ricardo Estrada, President and CEO, Metropolitan Family Services

Transition Committee: Business, Economic and Neighborhood Development

**The objective** is to maintain and enhance Chicago's standing as a global business center and leading city in which to raise a family.

However, business cannot thrive nor fully meet this objective without its most marginalized having opportunities to live empowered lives that contribute to the city's success.

**What we must keep or continue:**

We need to 1) keep and enhance municipal investments in cultural infrastructure, 2) promote active partnerships with corporate leaders and their companies, and 3) prepare our workforce to compete globally through talent development (human infrastructure) from pre-K to post-secondary education.

Business cannot succeed in the long run without these foundational investments, and for them to have real impact, they must happen with more purpose and in partnership with community. Cultural investments in the museum campus and central business district are important, but equitable investments, ones that also are strategic and integrated, also must be made in our city's 77 community areas. Our city's richness as a cultural hub – spanning the visual, literary, theatrical and musical – comes largely from our diverse ethnic identities and experiences. Partnership with corporate leaders and the companies they represent need to focus on mutual self-interest with a vision to impact all of the city for the greater good. We need leaders who will seek win-wins for their companies and Chicago, those who will work with us to sell products and services while developing local talent and communities so we all benefit collectively.

A global vision is necessary as foreign direct investment brings not only needed capital investments but offers broader perspective for the residents of our city, region and visitors to our civic amenities. Global vision expands and informs many aspects of how we govern, work and live. To remain viable and “in the race,” human infrastructure investment must continue. We need to eliminate the brain drain our state experiences as more and more students chose to study in other states, and many who come to our state's universities leave for the coasts after graduation. We need to disrupt this limiting paradigm, instead of recruiting, we must invest in native talent from all parts of the city. Those raised and anchored here are less likely to leave upon completion of studies.

**Goal:**

Build/Rehab 1,000 affordable homes on Chicago's West Side and South Side. 500 in each community in the first 18 months of the Mayor-Elect's first term.

We can use community residents to demolish, rehab and/or build in partnership with the trade union's apprenticeship programs as well as the many job development programs in the city. The builders will eventually become the owners. They will help build their own homes!

How do we finance it?

**This is in the category of “what is going on now that we need to keep.”**

In addition to negotiating affordable housing in the Lincoln Yards development, Sterling Bay should offer \$5 million to \$15 million to rehab/build homes that will be sold to people for \$75,000 per home. Similar commitments should be sought from developers of the future “The 78” development as well as any other major new developments.

In addition, funds from existing Infrastructure Trust, Land Trust, Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, TIFs and all other potential investment vehicles should be inventoried and leveraged together to form a coordinated and powerful investment platform!

The land will be transferred by the city to nonprofit community development organizations to do the planning and development work – they know how to do this. Labor will largely be free/

subsidized. It will be paid for by the dozens of community groups that have public grant dollars to subsidize work. The more skilled labor will be donated by firms, especially those that do more than \$2 million dollars a year in business with the city, partner labor unions and by philanthropic partners. If you are a construction, development or architecture company, etc. and do more than \$2 million in business with the city, you will be expected to offer skilled consultation and labor to this initiative.

Material will be purchased at discounts from companies that say “they care” about neighborhoods but do not know how to help.

At a purchase price of \$75,000, a 30-year mortgage will be affordable for residents. First-time home ownership grants and subsidies will be leveraged at this stage as well.

It sounds like a pipe dream, doesn't it? But think about it. We need affordable housing – check. We need jobs that offer training – check. We need agencies to support the workers, check. And, we need to offer renewed hope in the American dream of owning a home, check. Ultimately it offers a greater chance at a dignified life. If we have the will to do this, we can find a way to make it happen.

The ultimate goal is to inspire people to come back to Chicago and to encourage young families to stay. I am not only speaking about the stable middle- and upper middle-class, Lincoln Yards and the many other developments that will attract them. I am primarily talking about the working class, lower-middle class and working poor. They too need to find opportunity in this city. We need the tax base that greater density on the South and West Sides offers. In building a broad foundation for home ownership throughout the city, we help level a lopsided equation, where prosperity only resonates in certain pockets of Chicago. We help make it so all of the city can advance and contribute. This brings stability and investment.

There will be, of course, many challenges to this idea. But have we ever offered the opportunity for people to build their own homes? How exciting would that be? It would be a start to future investment and the building of more homes in the communities with historic underinvestment. With real commitment, it could reshape and substantively strengthen our city for the better, not just for us, but for our children and future generations. Local opportunity would generate local sourcing. We as a city would become a stronger magnet for business opportunities seeking our native talent pool. And, with greater access to capital, we could help encourage and seed budding and existing entrepreneurs, further expanding business and economic development opportunities for individuals, communities and our city.

People might say, “Why them?” “Why those people?” We should say, “Why the hell not!” It's time to make real change. Building homes with and for our city's residents has the potential to truly change the game. It is in our own and everyone's mutual best interest.



W. ROCKWELL WIRTZ  
*Chairman*

April 15, 2019

Honorable Lori Lightfoot  
Mayor-elect, City of Chicago  
VIA email: [bendcommittee@bettertogetherchicago.com](mailto:bendcommittee@bettertogetherchicago.com)

Dear Mayor-elect Lightfoot,

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on your transition team. It's an honor to work alongside such a distinguished group of talented professionals who, collectively, are working to make Chicago a better place. There is no doubt that Chicago, and you, face many challenges and serious issues involving finance, education, infrastructure, and transportation. The transition committee has requested a memo on what, through my lens, I see as critical issues. I'd like to begin with something I deal with on a daily basis, given our portfolio of businesses here in Chicago, throughout North America, and Canada: Chicago's standing among our peers and competitors.

1. Closing the Divide – Illinois

It is fully incumbent upon the next Mayor of Chicago to close the gap between the city and downstate. When you consider that the Mayor, the state's constitutional officers and legislative leadership all reside in Chicago, that effort will be more daunting, but still necessary. Chicago is the engine that drives Illinois. If it stops functioning, or falters, the rest of Illinois will feel the impact. However, Chicago cannot fix its problems without Springfield, and Springfield will not solve the state's problems without Chicago. I would encourage our new Mayor to establish a structure and a cadence to create a solid narrative with suburban and downstate influencers, including Mayors and regional employers. One step might include creating an office and naming a liaison, an individual who will travel the state on behalf of the Mayor, to discuss city initiatives and the benefits these efforts have to all of Illinois. The "us versus them" must end if Chicago and Illinois are going to move in a new direction. Inclusion is key.

**CHICAGO BLACKHAWK HOCKEY TEAM, INC.**

680 North Lake Shore Drive, 19th Floor, Chicago, IL 60611-4548 Phone (312) 943-7000 Fax (312) 751-1100

## 2. Debt Integrity – Illinois

Whatever support the Mayor provides Springfield for added revenues, such as a progressive income tax, must come with a demand that those added revenues address debt - and ultimately retire it. If one happens without the other, businesses will flee Illinois. If, however, the case can be made that the sacrifices high-incomed people will have to make, are part of a plan to stabilize and diminish the debt, there is a much stronger chance businesses and individuals might support and rally around it. Winning this kind of support will require trust, transparency and thoughtful financial planning. If people don't believe efforts to address the debt are real and workable, they will continue to leave Illinois for states that offer more favorable tax structures – something that's become a lot easier as more and more people work remotely. Building trust will not be easy, given our state's reputation. A first and I believe, essential step in the right direction would be opening up the state's constitution ... not just to a progressive tax, but to changes in the pension structure.

## 3. Transparency – Chicago

There are serious problems with the relations between Chicago's business community and government. They are frequently strained, often contentious, and disappointingly counter-productive. This does not appear to be the case in many other cities, both big and small, where progressive Mayors have open and respectful dialogues with their city's employer base. Mayors need businesses to remain viable and support business growth; while businesses, which are willing to invest more, must have the confidence and respect of their city leadership - beginning with the Mayor. The business community should not fear its Mayor, and no Mayor should be intimidated by any one business. A balance needs to exist and Chicago, over the past two administrations, has been out of balance. Confidence, trust and transparency need to be restored. Given the financial and social issues facing Chicago today, failing to restore this sense of balance will make overcoming these challenges even more difficult.

### A Path

I would respectfully recommend that our new Mayor commit to one breakfast meeting per month – with no more than 10 business leaders at a time – to engage in structured discussions around the concerns and objectives of employers, and to allow the Mayor to discuss her challenges and needs. We need candid, open dialogue about both short and long-term goals for our city. We need to be on the same page - and moving in the same direction.

#### A Path – Continued

Critical to the success of this program will be the diversity of the participants. Meetings should be scheduled well in advance, similar to corporate board meetings; no meeting will include an attendee of a prior board meeting, other than perhaps the host. 12 meetings, 120 employer/decision makers, from companies large and small, from across the city, reflecting the diversity in ownership that characterizes Chicago.

#### 4. Purposeful Taxation – Chicago

While no industry likes paying higher taxes, they would be a lot easier to swallow if there was a clear, positive purpose behind them. Take for example, the city amusement tax. It is, in my view, punitive, regressive, and runs the risk of killing business. If an event becomes too expensive for a family to go to, then that same family will not come to Chicago, not stay in a hotel, not eat in a restaurant, not take a cab to the venue, and not buy food and merchandise. The city, supporting businesses, and venue owners and their employees all suffer. There is reason why Chicago's peer cities work to keep these taxes low, or if possible, to avoid them.

If, on the other hand, the tax has a clear and defined purpose it would make everyone's sacrifice more palatable. For example, designating a portion of taxes on sporting events to the construction of athletic facilities in underserved neighborhoods. Or a percentage of the tax on concert tickets to fund music programs in underserved and underfunded Chicago Public Schools. Clear purposes that create positive synergy.

Sadly, as the attached report concludes, Chicago has already pushed these taxes to the highest in the country. Therefore, under the current structure, there is little room to work. But in a restructure, there would be willingness to perhaps establish growth funds, partnerships, or seek other creative and mutually beneficial solutions.

#### 5. End the Grandstanding – Chicago

Stop the rhetoric on national and international issues, and focus on Chicago. For the last few years, the Mayor's office has, apparently in search of political benefit, openly provoked the President of the United States, and always with great fanfare, in front of the Chicago media. The President, has, in turn, fired back each time before a global media audience, reminding the world that Chicago is rife with murders and out-of-control crime. The world is watching,

and seeing a constant stream of negative stories about our city, which we do not have the ability to counter. We need to protect and promote our brand, with pride and discipline.

6. Neighborhood Development – Chicago

Chicago will benefit, but not truly grow, if development continues to occur in only a handful of wards. For every one that prospers, at least five more suffer and languish; making Chicago even more segregated, socially and economically. There are too many underserved areas in Chicago to fix them all at once. But the place to start, in each neighborhood, is inside ... by creating economic incubators, by encouraging businesses to commit to create foundations within neighborhoods, for growth. By changing our mindset, to “building out,” not building “in.” The new Mayor will have the ability to attract talent to help create these new enterprise infrastructures, and, as trust grows between government and the business community, to encourage and support real results in bricks, mortar and job creation. Walking before running - measurable results. Real commitments. Not driven by press conferences and empty promises.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rocky' with a stylized flourish at the end.

W. Rockwell “Rocky” Wirtz  
Chairman, Chicago Blackhawks





Rebecca Yemin Shi, Executive Director, [Illinois Business Immigration Coalition](http://illinoisbic.biz) <sup>1</sup>

Transition Committee Member: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

Contact: [rshi@illinoisbic.biz](mailto:rshi@illinoisbic.biz)

## **Memo for Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot's Transition Committee Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Dev. Committee**

### **Memo Menu**

- Background: New Americans as an Engine for Economic Competitiveness
- Question 1: What is happening today that we need to keep?
- Question 2&3: What we need to implement immediately; or within the next year; and what we can plan for longer-term implementation?

### **BACKGROUND: New Americans as an Engine for Economic Competitiveness**

As Chicago works to be a thriving, vibrant economy, immigrants and immigration are a key asset to build upon in three ways: 1. As a workforce that strengthens our role as a global city; 2. As an important source of business and job creation, and 3. As an important group of consumers. There are several strategies that will enhance these assets.

#### **1. New Americans as a Workforce for a Global Economy:**

Chicago's immigrants and their children are an important part of a workforce strategy for the coming decades. Immigrants are 13% of the population of Illinois, but compose 27% of the "low-skill" labor and 28% of the PhD's in the state. Chicago cannot thrive without both a robust supply of workers in both categories. The "low skill" immigrants (a misnomer for immigrants with less English and less education) play an essential role in our restaurant, hospitality and tourism, convention, and manufacturing sectors. The "high skill" new Americans play important roles in the medical, engineering, academic, and technology sectors of the economy. The linguistic abilities of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Illinois Business Immigration Coalition promotes commonsense immigration reform that advances Illinois economic competitiveness, provides Illinois companies with both the high-skilled and low-skilled talent they need, and allows the integration of immigrants into our economy as consumers, workers, entrepreneurs and citizens. For more information please visit [www.illinoisbic.biz](http://www.illinoisbic.biz)*

the parents, and the potential linguistic abilities of their children are also an asset for global commerce.

The US economy added 196,000 jobs in March 2019 — once again surpassing expectations — while the Illinois unemployment rate ticked up to 4.0% from 3.9%. With the highest labor force participation rate in 6 years, the job market continues to defy expectations with the economy approaching full employment. March marked a record 103rd straight month of job gains. That's certainly good news, but the news could be much better if employers could find more job seekers for thousands of good paying jobs open. The 2019 IBIC Survey of 147 high and low skilled employers and business associations showed sixty-three percent hiring or trying to hire (up 5 points from 2018), but 55 percent (87 percent of those hiring or trying to hire) reported few or no qualified applicants for the positions they were trying to fill. This applies to all businesses in need of new workers—both skilled and unskilled. And the hiring needs are in industries that pay well. Along with hospitality and construction, this category includes manufacturing, healthcare, and financial services.

## 2. New Americans as Business and Job Creators:

The outsized role of immigrants in starting businesses and creating jobs is well-known. A drive through Chinatown, Devon Avenue, or 26th Street is enough to drive this point home. Nationally immigrants are twice as likely to start new businesses as the native born. Chicago's immigrant-owned businesses generated \$659 million in income in 2016. Immigrants may only have made up 20.7 percent of Chicago's population, but they represented 36.4 percent of the city's entrepreneurs in 2016, according to [a report](#) from the New American Economy, Illinois Business Immigration Coalition and Chicago Mayor's Office of New Americans released in December 2018. In fact, immigrants owned over 39,000 businesses and were 67.4 percent more likely to become entrepreneurs than people born in the U.S.

## 3. New Americans as Consumers:

Chicago has struggled to maintain its population. Population loss was stabilized by an influx of immigrants from 1990 to 2010. In recent years Chicago has begun to lose population again, and is in danger of no longer being a port of entry for immigrants. This not only affects workforce, but also our consumer base.

Chicago's immigrant population earned \$16.9 billion in 2016, the [report](#) said. With that income, immigrants paid \$4.4 billion in federal taxes and \$1.6 billion in state and local taxes that year.

To build on our assets, and to continue to attract new Americans there are several strategies that cost relatively little that can yield a lot, below

## **Question 1: What is happening today that we need to keep?**

### **“Chicago as a Welcoming City”**

Chicago and Cook County have taken important steps to communicate that it is a “Welcoming” city. These include a “Welcoming” ordinance that prohibits cooperation with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (This ordinance has several carve outs that can be eliminated.) Chicago has a Municipal I.D. program, administered by City Clerk Valencia. Chicago provides Community College scholarships to all youth with a “B” average, regardless of immigration status. Each of these initiatives is valuable, and should be continued and improved.

**“Chicago Legal Protection Fund and Community Justice Initiative”:** A community-based legal services program funded by the City of Chicago to address mass incarceration and mass deportation facing our vulnerable and resilient communities of color

After the 2016 election of President Donald Trump, Chicago City Council and Mayor Rahm Emanuel approved funding to support "Chicago Legal Protection Fund and Community Justice Initiative" to protect Chicago's vulnerable communities of color from the twin scourges of mass incarceration and mass deportation. Over the last 3 years, this program has trained over 200 navigators "super volunteers" from our neighborhoods to conduct mass "know your rights" presentations at faith institutions, schools, community organizations, block clubs etc and reached over 50,000 residents across all 50 wards. The program has connected vulnerable individuals to legal defense and representation. The "Chicago Model": a hybrid of community navigators and attorneys is now nationally recognized, and replicated throughout the country. Chicago model has outperformed New York City and Los Angeles year after year with far less funds (Per year Chicago 2M per year; NYC 5M; LA10M) because of our deep investment in and engagement by our communities and neighborhoods directly impacted. Chicago model has partnered with business associations and employers to reduce barriers to employment, provide certified training, and address labor shortage for Chicago employers. Because President Trump continues to execute policies that split apart families and threaten our communities of color, *“Chicago Legal Protection Fund and Community Justice Initiative”* is an impactful, costly-effective, community-based, grassroots-led empowerment program that needs to continue and even expand upon. “Cities for Citizenship”: The Mayor of Chicago is a founding co-chair of this national network of cities that promote naturalization for New Americans. In the past 5 years this has grown to 74 Mayors, County Executives, and Cities, with Chicago providing naturalization support locally and with the Mayor providing leadership nationally.

## **Question 2: Moving Forward: What we need to implement immediately; or within the next year; and what we can plan for longer-term implementation**

**CHICAGO GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS TASKFORCE** to *Create Jobs, Grow the Economy and Expand Access to Family-Sustaining Employment for Residents Living in Our Neighborhoods.*

**CHICAGO CAN BE A NATIONAL MODEL** with 1) smart, innovative, collaborative apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs that strengthen the existing workforce infrastructure, employer, business association, government and community partnerships 2) create an “access to justice” pipeline for immigrants and returning citizens to fill available positions by strengthening community based legal services to reduce barriers to employment, prosperity and housing including but not limited to expungement, know your rights, legal defense, certified training, and apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs; all in order to keep Chicago businesses globally competitive and provide good paying, family sustaining jobs to our vulnerable and resilient communities of color.

### **POTENTIAL High and Low skilled workforce SOLUTIONS**

- Apprenticeships and workforce pipelines: Increase access to / investment in workforce development for Chicagoans by supporting pre-apprenticeship pipelines and apprenticeship programs into in-demand industries:
  - Create short job training programs for low-skill workers in order to meet the demand for new and growing industries, with opportunities for paid on-the-job training
  - Establish a position within local Area Planning Councils that functions as liaison between Workforce Centers, CBOs, Apprenticeship Providers and Employers
  - Establish a “access to justice” pipeline for immigrants and returning citizens to fill available positions by strengthening community based legal services to reduce barriers to employment, prosperity and housing including but not limited to expungement, know your rights, legal defense, certified training, and apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Credential Transfer: Build credential transferring infrastructure and increase licensing accessibility including international transcript evaluations
- Language as an Asset: Invest in contextualized adult education and upskilling, beginning with industry-focused pilots at CBOs, to ensure job training completion and employer retention for low-skilled workers
- Employer education: Establish an employer compliance and worker protection program to prepare for I-9 audits and workplace raids.

*The Illinois Business Immigration Coalition promotes commonsense immigration reform that advances Illinois economic competitiveness, provides Illinois companies with both the high-skilled and low-skilled talent they need, and allows the integration of immigrants into our economy as consumers, workers, entrepreneurs and citizens. For more information please visit [www.illinoisbic.biz](http://www.illinoisbic.biz)*

### **Transition Memo:**

- Create destination business districts that attract city residents and visitors outside of the downtown central business area; ones that celebrate the diversity of the city. Support the exploration and accessibility of the city with robust transportation and marketing plans, understanding that doing so will drive and help sustain revenue.
- Be upfront about deep-rooted, systemic issues facing the city, and focus on solutions instead of problems. Utilize a scorecard that outlines metrics (unemployment, school graduation rates, housing values, police encounters, crime statistics, average wages, etc.) for each of the 77 neighborhoods or 50 wards and publish it. While the information is already out there, making it easily available and digestible in one place by a broad base of city residents is important. Keep it updated at regular intervals to show progress or lack thereof. Plan to continuously communicate with community in person to discuss and determine outcomes and solutions where necessary. This regular report should include a return on human investment that recognizes increased job readiness and attainment, lower incarceration rates, and the economic benefit from those kinds of improving statistics.

Create a new branding plan to lift up and communicate effectively the value in Chicago's history and diversity. This will also serve to help counter the crime and segregation statistics for which the city is generally known. It is crucial to whole city economic development to rewrite the narrative about communities beyond the central business district. The full narrative of the city's history or promise has never fully been conveyed. Chicago like many large cities, has a "Chinatown" and a "Greektown" located within proximity to the loop, visitors and residents of those areas are provided with insight in to the value of the city's immigrant history. The south and west sides of the city are, however, largely ignored, and the ethnic and historic treasures of the vast diversity in the remainder of Chicago goes largely unnoticed and are untapped. As such they are diminished.

- Anchor institution investments in neighborhoods such as Englewood and Woodlawn begin to recognize the needs of those communities. However, creating and growing wealth in underserved communities requires that the dollars spent in those institutions stay and recirculate in those communities. While there is some question about the validity of circulation statistics, the idea that the long term viability of even anchor institutions depends on the neighborhood's ability to sustain them. So, the ability of a neighborhood business district to attract dollars from the outside that were not there before is essential for wealth accumulation, growth, and intergenerational wealth transfer.

In the first 100 days, a qualitative, quantitative, and participative baseline assessment of each neighborhood would be important to see where investment is most needed and the wholistic supports that would make wealth accumulation and small business development stable and sustainable. Start to get the input from community residents on what they see as the greatest barriers to employment and business startup. Bring together educational, police, housing, and corporate citizens to determine how investments in a wider variety of communities can be made

with the greatest impact.

The value of engaging all parts of the city in targeted community development will be critical. The one thing that is different about Chicago than many other large cities is the diversity of business sectors represented in our corporate community. Their ability to locate essential business functions outside of traditional locations is central to a plan to recognizing the value of all Chicago and returning to a more historic model for Chicago development. Additionally, determining what would draw people to other parts of the city, how those areas could be branded and developed would have to work hand in hand. For example, a technology hub doesn't have to be located in the loop or Fulton Market, it could just as easily be an "anchor" creating wealth and traffic and surrounding services in any of a dozen underdeveloped neighborhoods. Getting the corporate community to recognize the long-term value in this will take time to develop an inclusive model and culture of good corporate citizenship. With a current plan for over \$16 billion dollars of investment to be spent between O'Hare airport and Lincoln Yards, there seems to be little or no plans for neighborhoods that currently struggle. Refocusing activity and commensurate types of investment throughout the city will be important to long term growth and sustainability.

Changing hearts and minds is a monumental process. Long-term practices have created a stigma attached to many neighborhoods that allows people to think that their current condition is the result of their unwillingness to "do better". This is simply not true.

Often times, checking the box of a charitable donation to address a problem rather than truly investing in the core issues makes people feel better, but the problem continues to develop and deteriorate. Doing the hard work to get people to believe in transformational investment will be critical to the success of a strategic investment plan. Additionally, addressing the wholistic needs of long term underserved communities will require that we treat not only the current outcomes, but stop the pipeline of problems at the same time.

April 11, 2019

Name: Sam Toia

Committee: Business, Economic, and Neighborhood Development

### Initiative

#### **Chicago Direct Connect**

- Hiring initiative that pairs pre-screened job-seekers with employers ready to hire immediately for their most pressing job openings
- Not just a “job fair”, but a series of hiring events where applicants can earn conditional offers of employment on the spot.

### Description

- This would be a series of events for employers and job seekers to meet and interview.
- Working with premiere workforce agencies, the events would provide employers with opportunities to take a strategic approach to finding their next best hires and for job seekers to find their next best employment opportunity.
- In advance of events, workforce agencies would help job seekers with practicing interview skills, assistance creating resumes, dressing appropriately, etc.

### Value of Initiative

- Puts job-seekers back to work at an accelerated pace
- Helps employers quickly fill varied positions within their organization
- Incentivizes companies to invest in Chicago with this additional hiring resource
- Streamlines the process of hiring for employers, which will help keep unemployment down and put Chicagoans most in need of opportunity back to work.
- For job seekers in disadvantaged neighborhoods, these hiring initiatives would provide them with employment opportunities in industries where they may not have realized there are jobs available

### Implementation/Current Practices

- For more than two years, the Illinois Restaurant Association, along with business association partners, has worked with the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership on an initiative called Hospitality Hires Chicago. More than 600 people have been hired in the restaurant, retail, hospitality, and tourism industries as the result of three Hospitality Hires Chicago events.
- This would act as a model for the Chicago Direct Connect initiative, which would expand the concept to other industries beyond hospitality.
- **The City could collaborate directly with the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership or an alternative workforce development agency to develop an expanded program applied to broader industries.**

### Implementation Needs – First 100 Days

- Mayor’s team collaborate with Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership team to determine

- feasibility for immediate expansion of Hospitality Hires Chicago
- Additional resources to workforce development agency to implement broader hiring initiative
- City would need buy-in from industries/associations to promote initiative and engage businesses

#### Implementation Needs – Long-Term

- For greater efficacy, City should collaborate with organizations that provide industry-specific training at the high school level to prepare students for various career paths
  - Example – ProStart® training for high school students that are pursuing careers in culinary and hospitality industries
  - ProStart® is a national, two-year program for high school students that develops the best and brightest talent into tomorrow's industry leaders.

#### Challenges

- Managing Chicago Direct Connect while not duplicating/undermining current initiatives around the city/county
- Need buy in and commitment from employers to be prepared to make job offers on the spot during hiring events
- Adequate funding for the program
- Prescreening time necessary for candidates
- Education and outreach to labor pool is key
- During hiring events, space constraints can be an issue



To: **Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot**

From: **Simone Weil**

Transition Committee: **Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development**

Focus: **Promote regional and inclusive economic growth**

**Robust growth strategy that reduces inequality.** Launch an economic strategy that builds on metropolitan Chicago's global competitiveness and grows family-sustaining jobs in every neighborhood.

**Context.** Chicago's economy and residents are inextricably linked with our suburban neighbors. Thirty-six percent of Chicagoans commute to suburban Cook or the collar counties,<sup>1</sup> and businesses rely on supply chains and customers that crisscross the region's invisible borders. Collectively our regional assets – which help drive business development – are derived from countless local decisions. Now more than ever, it is time for the region and the City of Chicago to implement joint strategies that reflect this interconnectedness and address existing inequity.

Evolving technologies, global commerce, and consumer demand are transforming economies around the world. Metropolitan Chicago is well-positioned to seize new opportunities due to our industrial strengths, diverse and skilled workforce, preeminent North American freight hub, dedicated civic leaders, and world-class institutions of education and research. Yet the region has experienced prolonged slow growth that lags behind our peers and national averages. During 2001-17, overall economic output increased on average just 0.9 percent annually, coupled with just 0.2 percent annual employment growth.<sup>2</sup> While many residents are able to thrive, economic outcomes vary starkly by race and ethnicity. Only one in five Hispanic adults has achieved an associate degree or higher, and 17.2 percent of black workers are unemployed – more than four times the overall U.S. unemployment rate.<sup>3</sup>

**Research-based.** A large body of empirical research shows that equitable economic opportunity drives growth; indeed, more equitable regions tend to experience longer, stronger periods of expansion and less severe downturns.<sup>4</sup> The City of Chicago's strategy should pursue two parallel tracks – growing the economy and catalyzing prosperity in all neighborhoods.

**Grow economic opportunity.** The City should strengthen its commitment to a regional economic strategy like the one currently led by the Chicago Regional Growth Corporation (CRGC). The region's recently adopted long-range comprehensive plan, ON TO 2050, calls for coordination at the regional level and recommends support for CRGC to develop and implement a growth strategy.<sup>5</sup> In taking shared ownership of CRGC with the chairs of the seven county boards, the City would inform smart, targeted strategies to grow the region's diverse and specialized economy – for example, increasing exports and foreign investment, rather than shuffling existing business activity from one regional locality to another. Businesses that compete in national and global markets make up one-third of the region's jobs but more than half of resident income.<sup>6</sup> These industries have an outsized ability to create new jobs and better support upward economic mobility. The City's commitment should also advance CRGC's focus on inclusive growth. Despite having stated its strong commitment, the organization has not yet articulated meaningful strategies to address inequity in our workforce or among business owners. For instance, CRGC's industry strategies should inform and align with the efforts of strategic workforce partners to shape career pathways and apprenticeships in jobs of regional significance.

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<sup>1</sup> Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) analysis of U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics data, "[Travel trends](#)," ON TO 2050 snapshot report, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> CMAP [analysis](#) of Bureau of Economic Analysis and Economic Modeling Specialists International data (Emsi), 2017.

<sup>3</sup> CMAP [analysis](#) of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2010 and 2017.

<sup>4</sup> CMAP, "[Inclusive Growth](#)," ON TO 2050 strategy paper, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> CMAP, "[Pursue regional economic development](#)," ON TO 2050, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> CMAP, "[Support the region's traded clusters](#)," ON TO 2050, 2018.

**Expand neighborhood prosperity.** The City should expand and scale up partnerships with communities to create and update neighborhood plans so residents and businesses can define a shared vision. These plans should consider the need for amenities that improve quality of life, such as local retail and food access, as well as better position communities to leverage their assets to attract and retain export-oriented businesses that bring well-paying jobs. The plans should consider investments in core assets, like people, local institutions, and the built environment, over incentives and align local objectives with the economic benefits realized regionally. For example, the City can support neighborhoods by growing employment around equitable transit-oriented development<sup>7</sup> and preserving appropriate industrial land uses. Since 2012, the CMAP Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program has undertaken dozens of such plans across the region. In the City, CMAP partnered with community organizations, elected officials, and the City's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to lead transparent and inclusive planning processes from Pullman to the North River Communities. Transformative local planning informs and empowers residents, prioritizes public investments in development, and enables residents to revitalize communities.

**Values-driven.** Chicago has the opportunity to pursue an economic strategy that promotes inclusive growth at both the regional and neighborhood levels. Public debates on racial and economic inequality often focus solely on improving education and skills, and their value cannot be overstated. Yet, the structure of our regional economy – the kinds of occupations and industries present here – also shapes the opportunities that workers find in the labor market. Equity must be at the core of making decisions and developing strategies to bolster the region's industries. This will mean changing old practices. Incentives, for instance, do little to address our long-term needs and competitiveness, and they frequently run counter to good or inclusive governance. Because they require coordinated action across communities, strong economic strategies and local plans only work if they are imbued with transparency, inclusion, and accountability.

**Action-oriented.** These measures will require reorienting activities among World Business Chicago (WBC) and DPD, as well as engaging the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, Department of Transportation, Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Housing Authority, and other entities in new ways. CMAP's research and analysis, and the ON TO 2050 plan, could also inform the City's strategies to address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality-of-life issues.

**From day one.** The administration can engage with CRGC and its elected leaders – committing leadership and some resources to the effort. At the community level, the administration can evaluate existing CMAP LTA plans and DPD's approach, such as Chicago Neighborhood Now's planning efforts<sup>8</sup> – addressing gaps and leveraging strengths.

**In the first 100 days.** The City can work with CRGC to establish a strategic direction for growing globally-competitive industries in an inclusive manner. The administration can launch an effort workforce development partners, and business leaders to develop more career pathways and apprenticeship programs that reach diverse populations. On the community level, the new administration can launch neighborhood planning efforts across the City.

**Challenges.** This work will require building trust with communities that have not enjoyed recent economic prosperity and regional stakeholders. The challenge of building trust cannot be understated. In a similar vein, reorienting the approach for WBC or DPD will require resolute leadership.

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<sup>7</sup> Elevated Chicago, "What's eTOD?" <https://www.elevatedchicago.org/whats-etod/>.

<sup>8</sup> City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development, [Chicago Neighborhoods Now](#).

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## **Memo**

**Submitted to:** Business Economic Neighborhood Development Transition Committee

**Submitted:** Teresa Rufaro Prim, Prim Lawrence Group

**Date:** April 15, 2019

**Re:** Request for Initiative Recommendations.

### **Proposed Initiative**

Formation a City of Chicago led ***Opportunity Zone (OZ) and Neighborhood Investment Collaboration (or Consortium)*** that will prepare an investment prospectus to facilitate private capital investment including ***but not limited*** to: Opportunity Zone Investments (OZ), foundations and/or individuals in targeted neighborhoods on the south and west side of Chicago.

To date in Chicago numerous meetings have been convened and attended by local stakeholders including but not limited to philanthropy, non-profits, public and private sector, and potential investors. However, these meeting have merely informed participants of the new tax incentive investment opportunity and/or led to small discussions. Nothing, however, has yet materialized as a way forward that insures economic and social impact within targeted neighborhoods that have historically been left behind.

### **Recommendation**

The City of Chicago should convene within the first 100 days a ***City of Chicago OZ and Neighborhood Investment Collaboration*** (or consortium) to prepare an “Investment Prospectus.” This body would be ongoing and long term. Building upon a tool for OZ investment by the New Localism Advisor and Accelerator for America, which is designed to help cities and neighborhoods identify and communicate its distinctive assets, accelerate employment density, business demand and smart place-making, align city investments and advantages of selected OZs as well as viable projects for investment. Cities, like Louisville and St. Louis and many others, have already published OZ prospectus. See link here [https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/louisville\\_forward/louisville\\_prospectus\\_2.2019.pdf](https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/default/files/louisville_forward/louisville_prospectus_2.2019.pdf) and [https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/sldc/real-estate/opportunity-one/documents/upload/STL\\_OZ\\_Prospectus\\_web.pdf](https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/sldc/real-estate/opportunity-one/documents/upload/STL_OZ_Prospectus_web.pdf). Given the interest expressed to date by relevant stakeholders, executing this initiative should not bear many challenges. The City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development provides an infrastructure to convene the proposed body.

As cited by Bruce Katz and Ken Gross in “A Opportunity Zone Investment Prospectus Guide,” an Investment Prospectus will help concretize a unified vision for equitable and inclusive growth, leverage public and private sector capital and catalyze better investments and decisions. The Investment Prospectus is a hybrid of three more common documents or approaches: a community marketing strategy, an economic development policy brief and a private investment memorandum see link <http://www.acceleratorforamerica.com/OZGuide>.

Often in the past, the City of Chicago has been “developer centric,” resulting in it being responsive to the self-interests and financial benefit of developers versus ensuring that the leveraging of public resources maximizes benefits to the City and its residents. Through a City led collaboration of all stakeholders the creation of a city-wide Investment Prospectus will provide a shared platform for government (state, county and city), financial institutions, individual donors, foundations and local community development institutions to collect and analyze data, mutually set investment criteria and evaluate impact.

The Investment Prospectus should highlight those OZs that are *not* near or within gentrifying census tracts like Fulton Market and the old Michael Reese Hospital site on the lakefront where market-rate financing resources can support the redevelopment of these sites, while at the same time generate a financial return to their investors. Census tracts in community areas on the south and west side should be clustered where feasible, e.g. sub-regions. The Urban Institute developed a score of investment flows based on capital access to tracts based on the four components of commercial lending, multifamily lending, single-family lending and small business lending but noted that other flows of capital such as local, state, federal and philanthropic funding were not included and would require local knowledge to help contextualize, clarify and even correct the understanding conveyed via the score, a next steps which the City and collaboration could facilitate (<https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/metropolitan-housing-and-communities-policy-center/projects/opportunity-zones-maximizing-return-public-investment>). To further inform the City and the collaborative, the Urban Institute released a report that divides OZ tracts into two categories: 1) those that need to jump start and accelerate growth, and 2) those that require guardrails so investments do not simply benefit land speculation and fuel gentrification.

OZ rules require that most of the business tangible property be new to both the business and the OZ unless the business substantially improves the property. In addition to identifying companies seeking to expand and relocate, this provision incentivizes investments in start-up or new companies within the OZ. To ensure the desired impacts are scalable, as well as address the racial wealth gap through job creation, shared ownership models such as worker-owned cooperatives, and conversion of existing companies for sale to worker-owned should also be considered along with real property, e.g. revitalizing vacant land and/or buildings for affordable housing.

### **Infusion of Values**

In order to insure transparency, equity, accountability, diversity, inclusion and transformation the City of Chicago led collaboration should: 1) Be comprised of regional and local community development organizations and developers who reflect the racial and gender diversity within the targeted neighborhoods as well as philanthropy, potential donors and citywide developers and corporate leaders; 2) Make the Investment Prospectus public before being final to provide for broader feedback and 3) Establish a set of criteria for public sector investment, i.e. number and quality of jobs, companies within innovative and growth industries, minority and women owned business participation, values as well as ensure sustainable or net zero development.

**Tim Tuten**

President & Co-Owner

**The Hideout**

**Business, Economics, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee**

**Come Back to Chicago! We're starting over!**

**Pulaski at Night**

by

[Andrew Bird](#)

*Half empty, half full  
Cup runneth over  
Horns of plenty, coffers full  
**We're starting over***

...

*I paint you a picture  
Of Pulaski at night  
**Come back to Chicago**  
**City of, city of light**  
**Come back to Chicago***

...

***We're starting over!***

Andrew Bird, In Paris, "the City of Light"

Andrew Bird in Paris 2016

Andrew Bird, comes back to Chicago

Andrew Bird at the Hideout 2017

*This is just an example of how Andrew Bird, a "small business" person from Chicago, can promote Chicago to the rest of the world.*

**Memo to Business, Economics, and Neighborhood Development Transition Committee**

- **A potential initiative (one sentence)**

**Chicago's Clean & Green New Deal** will promote Chicago's safe and clean neighborhoods, to the small business, "creative economy" to every neighborhood, school, block and lot in Chicago.

- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:**

How do we teach our children the words “equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation”? As parents and teachers, we know that before a child can read, they can see us, and model our behavior. Actions speak louder than words. And as **Jane Addams**, Chicago's first Nobel Prize winner said: “*Action indeed is the sole medium of expression for ethics.*”

**Action In Deed!** On the first day The NEW Mayor should act! May 20 should be seen as a break from the past; in a way that any child can see and understand. This is a NEW day in Chicago! Inauguration Day on May 20 should be seen like the first day of Summer. ***Chicago is starting over!***

Remember Everything I needed to know, I learned in Kindergarten? Well let's get back to that! Like when the Black Panthers initiated the first breakfast programs. Let's focus on our children, especially our teen agers, to make Chicago a **New Clean, Green and TEEN City!**

Every school, all 600+ must be connected to a city agency, and local businesses. Many are already. This should be mandatory that every business in the city must have a contact with the neighborhood grade and high schools. These schools in turn must have a contact with local businesses.

- **And as it pertains to this initiative:**

**o What is happening today that we need to keep**

There are many, many organizations in the intersection between students and business; Mikva Challenge, Embarc, Arne Duncan's and the Emerson Collective's Chicago CRED immediately come to mind. There are many more. The mayor needs to really prioritize a “***school to career pipeline***”. This concept is nothing new. There have been numerous studies linking crime to inadequate economic development. We don't need another study. We need to act! There needs to be a blunt message, that economic development is about “life and death”. And Chicago is alive now. The corruption is dead now. It is “Springtime in Chicago”, and we have fertile soil for small business that wants to grow.

**o What we need to implement in the next 100 days**

- **ACT! All Chicagoans Together!**
  - Teen agers often dread the ACT for college. Let's “flip” it, and use ACT as an acronym for all of us. All Chicagoans Together!
  - The actual, physical first thing we do is “start with a clean slate”. Like the first day of school, a child feels like it's a fresh start!
  - We often tell our teens that they can not go out until they have finished their homework and cleaned their room.

***Let's call it a Clean, Green, Teen New Deal. Let's clean up our House!***

- **Small Business!**

The key to Chicago neighborhood development is small business. In every neighborhood. Starting a small business is like when a person is buying or selling a house. You want to clean it up first to sell it. You clean it up when you move in.

***Let's literally clean up Chicago!***

The First “100 Days perfectly coincides with Summer “Vacation”. May 20 (when young people start to get out of school for Summer break), through Labor Day September 1, (when the CPS kids go back to school).



### **The Mayor should call for a clean city, and a City clean government.**

While corruption is being swept out of City Hall, the people of Chicago will be actually sweeping up our streets, alleys, parks.

- The slogan can be: **"Everybody grab a broom"**.
- **All 50 Wards** will be expected to organize **"Clean Teams"** (at least every weekend through the summer).
- To pick up garbage, clean out vacant lots, parks etc.
- All local businesses will be asked to contribute what they can.
  - Large corporations like Home Depot, Menards, Lowes, Target, will be asked to contribute garbage bags, brooms, gloves etc.
  - Small restaurants can donate pizzas, sandwiches, whatever.
  - Every adult and child can help. North, South, West-side wards, neighborhood groups, churches, Boy and Girl Scout groups will be encouraged to help in each other's neighborhoods.
  - Every parade will have the Mayor, aldermen, activists carrying brooms, mops, etc. in "Bucket Brigades"

### **o What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

Chicago should become the National model for the Green New Deal

- We should **Manufacture Green Prosperity!**
- **The BACP should be enhanced**, with a more pro-active, pro-small, local business mission and responsibility.
- **"Lori's List"**, City creates **Lori's List, based on the concept of "Angie's List"**.
  - Any business in Chicago will be reviewed from Yelp Reviews, and other sites, such as Angie's List.
  - Lori's List will also connect businesses to area schools.
- Chicago must create an **Office of New Urban Mechanics** like Philadelphia and Boston.
- We need to work with the amazing University of Chicago's Urban Labs and folks like Theaster Gates.
- **Vacant Land and Building Audit**: The City needs to account for **every single empty lot and building**.
  - Owners need to be identified and accounted for.
  - The City should confiscate derelict properties.
  - Vacant property will be seen as a "crime"; a "code violation" and/or a "safety issue".
  - The City will pro-actively go after delinquent property tax holders.
  - The City will work with Community groups, and activists to identify questionable properties.
  - The City will redistribute land and property to local community activists and organizations with a plan.
  - Community members will recommend better uses for the properties, working with City representatives from a menu of ideas.
  - These properties will create a stockpile of properties for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
  - They can be used for "Victory Gardens", Fruit trees, Urban Farming
- **Small, locally based businesses will be encouraged to expand, or add another franchise in properties in underserved communities.**
- Eligible small businesses will be able to access **"Lori's List"** of small companies and contractors who can provide tangible services such as roof repair, masonry, plumbing, windows, electrical.
- These same small, local companies **MUST** have contact and **employ Chicago teenagers through the City/CPS programs.**
- The **unions can provide training** and support for these students.

### **o What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**

- Many suburban, down-state, and national businesses will feel that this Chicago-Centric

campaign and approach will prevent them from doing business in the city. Currently the Suburbs are losing retail stores, and malls are closing. This is due to multiple demographic, socio-economic and cultural trends. Large corporations are leaving their “suburban Campuses” for the city.

- The City will encourage, and work with suburban, and outside companies to set up a **local office**, in an underserved community and Opportunity Zones.
- To hire more Chicagoans, teens, women, people of color, residents of Opportunity Zones, veterans, ex-offenders.

*In order to stimulate and generate business and economic development in the most underserved areas of Chicago, we need to immediately work with every city agency, public schools, and existing businesses to literally focus, repair, maintain, and clean up our neighborhoods. Simultaneously, the City will work with the business community and other organizations to promote neighborhoods to local Chicagoans, interested in starting small companies, and in outside businesses to move in, or come back to Chicago. Forget about Amazon HQ2. Let's focus on small, owner-operated shops and venues. Let's start by sweeping the streets and cleaning up the vacant lots. Reminding our children that our city's motto is **Urbs in Horto!***

*Now, “everybody, grab a broom!”  
Let's get to work!*

Tim Tuten  
The Hideout  
April 2019



Mayor-Elect Transition Team Memorandum

Dr. Byron T. Brazier

Apostolic Church of God

The Network of Woodlawn

Arthur M. Brazier Foundation

The Purpose of this memo is to respond to the Mayor-elect's request.

As we continue to review specific recommendations during the transition team meeting, two factors must exist: 1) defined initiatives for ensuring that all neighborhoods participate in regional groups and 2) all individuals receive real opportunity and participate in the region's economic vitality.

In reviewing the values of the Lightfoot Administration, the question this memorandum looks to clarify is how do we address the systemic issues of culture and bias through progressive development of an institutional support system? We recognize that such communities are a totality of human relationships, distinguished by mutual interest, shared institutions, and culture, that are engaged in a common activity of living. At the same time, we recognize the causes for the dysfunction within under-served communities. In order to effectuate real change, there must be transformation of both systemic thought and the capacities that sustain community dysfunction. Over the years, our society has been inundated with excellent research. We are also inundated with the implementation of program-after-program and at the end of the programs, communities remain the same. In Woodlawn, the University of Chicago touts its community awareness and programs, but Woodlawn and Washington Park are still the same, primarily because their programming only impacts a few individuals and not the community at-large. University of Chicago's programming is more like trickle-down economics: it sounds good but no real impact.

The question becomes: How does the City of Chicago best support under-served communities to become self-determined and self-sustaining and less dependent on unsustainable programmatic initiatives? For this to be achieved, communities must organize as a collective body to receive the support offered by the City of Chicago or other philanthropic organizations. This type of necessary organizational capacity is described in the "The Promise of Comprehensive Community Development Report," authored by David Greenberg and Sonya Williams of MDRC. In summary, they explained, "that comprehensive community development may best be achieved not by a single organization but by the mobilization and coordination of many neighborhood actors. Program designers made a choice to rely on a single lead agency that is charged with facilitating collective work and is responsible for catalyzing action that is not fully in its control — a challenging task under the best of conditions. It is additionally challenging for organizations to become effective neighborhood-wide conveners or "intermediaries" when they do not already have these skills or where the local environment does not provide incentives to collaborate".

Concerning land development, we recognize that the current system of private development for land acquisition and development is a multi-layered, profit oriented system that is known to

enhance gentrification and regards involuntary displacement as a market consequence. Additionally, there is minimal monitoring of the developer's project delivery, project quality, and community benefit. Unfortunately, the developer-led process provides limited advantages when we consider the consequences of displacement.

If we were to effectively address community development, I would recommend creating a community-led development approach that acts in concert with private development. This approach is in formulation between the City of Chicago, Cook County Land Bank, three banks, LISC and the Public Building Commission.

The benefits of this process will include:

- Communities have the opportunity to participate in the capitalistic development process and become more self-determined and self-sufficient.
- It will support the inclusion of indigenous contractors and developers through the underwriting process.
- This process will intentionally address and minimize involuntary displacement through accelerated redevelopment and aggregation of institutional resources.
- It will balanced redevelopment across luxury, market rate, and workforce housing.
- Increased and sustained employment through accelerated and balanced development.

The final recommendations are being finalized and available in May 2019.

April 15, 2019

Dear Mayor Elect Lightfoot and Business, Neighborhood, and Economic Development Committee Members, Co-Chairs, and Facilitators,

The following recommendations are from **Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT)**, a nonprofit organization committed to improving women's economic equity by increasing their participation in well-paid, skilled trades jobs traditional held by men. Originally established by tradeswomen in 1981 as a support network, CWIT now offers a range of direct service programming and technical assistance that addresses the barriers that prohibit women and girls from entering and succeeding in male-dominated jobs by creating opportunities and promoting equitable training and workplaces. These recommendations are designed to redress a significant barrier that continues to impede women's progress in the skilled trades – the lack of consistent employment opportunities.

The **potential initiative** we propose is the expansion of the **We Can Build It** construction hiring model – an initiative that links pre-apprenticeship training programs with hiring goals for women and people of color on targeted construction projects such as the Obama Presidential Center - to upcoming city projects including Lincoln Yards, the 78, new terminal at O'Hare Airport, and expansion of the public transit system.

To infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in that initiative, and similar workforce initiatives we recommend that the City of Chicago:

- Promote **inclusion** by establishing goals on publically funded construction /transit/public safety projects for workforce participation (by hours worked) by gender and race.
- Promote **equity** by requiring contractors and public agencies to commit to training their workforce on topics that address Respectful Workplaces and Sexual Harassment Prevention, Being an Ally, Mentoring, and Equitable On-the-Job Training and Workplace Practices.
- Support **diversity** by institutionalizing funding for preparatory training programs for women, high-school students and underrepresented populations to become competitive candidates for high-wage, high-skill construction/transit/manufacturing/public infrastructure and safety jobs. Ensure programs are funded to provide wraparound services and resources that address barriers such as childcare, transportation and housing. Foster direct pipelines from these programs to employers, apprenticeship programs, and public agencies to ensure employment opportunities.
- Promote **accountability and transparency** by establishing a public Construction Equity Oversight committee, consistent pro-active monitoring practices and public reporting on workforce participation achievements.

To advance this initiative:

- Keep and invest in the growth and success of **We Can Build It**. Support its visibility and promote contractor support and buy-in.
- Implement in the next 100 days **workforce equity goals** for upcoming city projects- Lincoln Yards, the 78, etc.
- For longer-term implementation, create school based programs that **introduce girls to nontraditional careers** – specifically those in STEM and that don't require college degree.
- To address challenges and assure long term **sustainability and transformation**, develop

a plan for **technical assistance to build the capacity** of contractors, public agencies, unions, apprenticeship programs and the workforce development system to build a diverse, inclusive and equitable workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our recommendations. We look forward to the implementation of these ideas serving as a pathway to economic opportunity and security for many Chicago residents who are unemployed or underemployed, and certainly underrepresented in significant and vibrant economic sectors. At the same time, these recommendations reflect an important investment for the business community and the city to build a local, reliable, and skilled workforce.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lauren Sugerman

Lauren Sugerman  
National Policy Director  
Chicago Women in Trades

For more information contact: [lsugerman@cwit.org](mailto:lsugerman@cwit.org) or at Office/312-942-1444 or Cell/773-964-6428